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Principles of Social Organization in Southern Kurdistan

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

The publishing activity of the *Universitetets Etnografiske Museum*, Oslo, had gradually become chiefly concerned with the editing of old historical sources concerning Same (Lapp) culture. There is no doubt that the museum under the directorship of the late Prof. O. Solberg satisfied an urgent need by publishing this material in its series «Nordnorske Samlinger», and we are greatly indebted to the late Prof. Solberg for his having made these extremely important contributions to the understanding of old Same (Lapp) culture. On the invitation of this museum, however, its Same (Lapp) collections have been transferred to the *Norsk Folkemuseum*, Bygdøy; consequently this museum has also taken over the publication of the series «Nordnorske Samlinger» under the new title «Samiske Samlinger».

Of the two series in quarto, «Skrifter» and «Bulletin», published by the *Universitetets Etnografiske Museum*, the latter from now on will be published in octavo and contain both monographs and shorter papers, in English, French, or German. The range of subjects will be very wide, including both descriptive and theoretical studies from different parts of the world and in most various fields of anthropology. I welcome Fredrik Barth's study which will prove to be an important contribution to the scanty literature on Kurdish social structure.

Universitetets Etnografiske Museum (Oslo) — April 1953.

Gutorm Gjessing.

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000 wandering harvestman to the most prominent *Beg*, will remain one of my fondest memories.

In the analysis of the material and preparation of the manuscript I have benefited greatly from the kind and stimulating advice of Dr. E. R. Leach, Reader in anthropology at the London School of Economics. I am further thankful to Miss Elizabeth Bott of the Tavistock Institute, London, for reading and criticising several drafts. The present manuscript is published through the courtesy of Prof. Gutorm Gjessing, aided by a grant from Norges Almenvitenskapelige Forskningsråd.

Oslo, February 2, 1953. *Fredrik Barth.*

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Map No. 1: The Middle East.
(For detail on the area of study, enclosed in small square, see Map. No. 2.)

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INTRODUCTION

631 [34] Scattered over the South Kurdish countryside are a great number of small, compact villages, essentially similar in their physical aspects, yet highly variegated with respect to their composition and organization, ranging from extended lineage organizations to fully developed feudal organization. Thus, on the village level, there is a great diversity of forms of social organization. Yet the *culture* of the area seems essentially uniform, and these alternative principles of organization are universally known. In the recent history of some villages, there has been a rapid, fundamental change from one type of social organization to another. In the following, an attempt will be made to discuss these various types of organization as they express themselves in the actual power hierarchy of individuals in the village. The discussion will thus be directed towards discovering what types of social categories exist, what actual powers each category entails, and which of these categories are found in harmonious conjunction — since some of the categories that belong in different basic frameworks of social organization are, as might be expected, mutually exclusive in any local community.

177 It seems probable that a fluid and complex situation of this type is characteristic of societies which lie in the shatter zone between larger culture areas — in this case, between the Arab, Persian, and Turkish. Such a location produces familiarity with various competing normative systems, principles of organization, and power hierarchies. This familiarity on the part of the villager leads to attempts at

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manipulating these various systems and principles. Thus competing factions, manipulating the familiar (but in part mutually exclusive) systems, will establish different power hierarchies in different villages, resulting in the present variety of forms of social organization found in the area.

However, one type of basic organization may be said to be autonomously Kurdish. This is usually called *tribal*, and is based on the *lineage principle*. Any movement away from this basic framework of organization will be the result of the above type of manipulations, and may be seen as a step in a «de-tribalization process». A special attempt will be made to explore the structure of the tribal group, and its reactions to the pressures that tend to lead to its breakdown.

Certain characteristics of the lineage system in its Kurdish application might profitably be stated immediately, to avoid confusion. The Kurds practice close family endogamy with preferential FaBrDa marriage, and a Kurdish descent group shows many consequent characteristics, among which is a tendency towards constant branching and the establishment of new, independent endogamous subsections. The concept of a lineage, as developed for other areas, normally applies to an *exogamous* grouping. However, the main importance of the lineage concept is in the field of political organization, and it will be seen that the political functions of the Kurdish descent groups and the African lineage groups are essentially similar. This might be expected, if only from the following consideration: Women in Kurdish society are normally of minimal political importance, and matrilineal descent has no political significance. The strictly *patri*lineal descent group will be unmodified by any patterns of preferential marriage. Since this, in Kurdish society, is the politically significant group, the fact of endogamy has no direct political importance. I have therefore chosen to call this patrilineal descent group a *lineage* when politically recognized.

After an orientation on some factors which are uniform over the whole South Kurdish area, notably in the field of subsistence and kinship, the formal lineage organization will be discussed, as well as the basic pattern of non-tribal formal organization; and the fundamental composition of the resulting local groups will be treated.

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However, the formal political organization gives only a partial picture of the actual power hierarchy and organization in the village, and the remainder of the paper will attempt to show how this power hierarchy emerges, and what the characteristics of the resulting type of social organization are.

By way of introduction, the ethnic position and history of the Kurds should be sketched briefly. The great majority of Kurds are today, and have been for some time, settled or transhumant joint cereal agriculturalists and stock-breeders; some tribes are still purely pastoral nomads, of what has been called the *ovicaprid*, Persian type. The Kurds inhabit the mountainous crescent stretching from the Euphrates in northern Syria and Turkey to Kermanshah in Persia; the backbone of this crescent is formed by the Zagros mountains. Towards the Mesopotamian plain they extend roughly through the foothill area; to the North and East, Kurdish territory blends into that of Armenia and Azerbaijan. In much of their area, Kurds make up only a minority of the total population. Southern Kurdistan is, on the other hand, almost exclusively inhabited by Kurds. (cf. Map No. 1.)

The population density in most Kurdish territory is very low, the characteristic settlement pattern is in small, compact villages of 50 to 300 inhabitants, widely scattered over the area. The Kurds today are estimated to number some 3 million (The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1911), but of that figure a great number are urbanized or turkicized, and Kurds by descent only.

The Kurdish language belongs to the Indo-European stock and shows great similarity to Persian, but also exhibits features that suggest a process of parallel development and borrowing rather than recent splitting. Literary efforts in Kurdish have been only sporadic. Historical records seem to accord Kurds an ethnic group considerable antiquity in the area (Minorsky, 1913), assuming them to be the Carduks who harried the retreat of Xenophon's 10 000 (401—400 B.C.). Early converted to Islam, independent Kurd principalities attained some degree of organization only after the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate, but generally played a minor role (except in producing Sultan Saladin at the time of the 3rd Crusade). A major part of

[text continues on p. 2]

Map No. 1. Southern Kurdistan — The territory of the old Baban Principality. Dotted Line: Iraq—Persian border.

Villages studied.

1—5. Tenure villages of the Sulaimani valley.
6. Shaikh Mahmud's village of residence.
7. Village of residence of Darwish Lendo.
8—9. Dimensional villages.
9. Tenure village of the Germian lowlands.

groups 6.

Kurdish territory was conquered by the Ottoman Sultan Selim I, 1515
but retained considerable local autonomy, leading to adjustment
rather than replacement of traditional Kurdish organization.

The area generally called Southern Kurdistan, where the present 150
material was collected, may be delimited on ethnic and geographical
grounds (cf. Map. No. 2). It is bounded on the north by the Lower
Zab, on the south by the Diyala river. To the east it stretches up
into the Zagros mountains to the Persian frontier. A western border
can only be drawn on ethnic, and rather arbitrary criteria, since
Kurdish territory extends in part beyond the foothill area, into a
zone where Kurd and Arab villagers and villages mingle.

Physiographically, the area is characterized by a series of ridges 1933
running NW—SE, building up towards the Persian mountains. The
drainage pattern is rather complex, partly leading to the Lower Zab,
partly to the Diyala, and some smaller rivers disappearing in the dry
area south and west of the city of Kirkuk.

In the lowlands, the *Garmian* (lowlands) of the Kurds, condi-
tions approach semi-desert, and agriculture becomes increasingly
has been called the rainfall zone (Warriner, 1948, p. 100), but
generally falls somewhat short of this, leaving the remaining area
to Arab agriculturalists with an identical economy.

Though predominantly Kurdish, the area shows some ethnic diver- 162
sity. There is contact with permanent Arab settlements in a rather
broad zone of mixture. Bedouin herdsmen in the summer graze their
camels as far as the Chemchemal valley, and have at times remained
in the area continuously for several years. The city of Kirkuk has a
considerable Turkish-speaking population, and Turkish-speaking
villages may still be found in a wide stretch of the lower districts.
Some 100 years ago, Turkomans nomads occupied some of these areas
(Rich, 1836). The town of Sulaimani had till 1911 a considerable
Jewish population, as well as the still persisting small Chaldaean
Christian minority.

The Kurds themselves exhibit considerable diversity, ranging from
tribally organized nomadic herdsmen to feudal peasants. The Gar-
mian lowlands are mainly peopled by detribalized sedentary farmers.

[2] The southern section around Qizil Robat are formed by settled members of the Jaf tribe, working as tenants on their old tribal land. Here are also the winter camps of the nomadic Jaf. The Shahr-i-zor plains around the town of Halabja are the autumn camp grounds of the same group, and support a large population of tenant Jaf. The summer grazing grounds of the nomads lie in the high mountains around Penjwin.

The Chemchemal valley is the territory of the Hawrewaz tribe of freeholding farmers, partly co-habiting the area with an impoverished assimilated serf group. In the broad valley around Sulaimani are non-tribal tenant farmers, in the high area of Pushdir, further north, are tribally organized farmers. The Hawramiyan in the Zagros range by Halabja are dialectically and ethnically rather distinct, tribally organized, usually freeholding garden farmers or cultivators.

[15] Some historical orientation is necessary. The city of Sulaimani was for centuries the capital of a rather independent Pushdir segment of the Ottoman Empire, ruled by Pashas of the Baban family. This Pushdir included most if not all the territory described above. A [illegible] was moderately effective, leading to a breakdown of most tribal political organizations and the development of a large group of serfs and tenant farmers. Conditions during Baban rule are well described by Claudius James Rich (op.cit.), a very observant traveller in the early 19th century. Due to complex intrigue in Baghdad and Istanbul, Baban rule was suddenly brought to an end in 1851, and considerable instability resulted. The *Jaf* tribe, on the one hand, became powerful and assimilated numerous groups of other tribes in their organization; the *Jaf* leaders consolidated their positions as landowners and took on the appearance more of feudal lords than tribal chiefs. On the other hand, the *Hawrewaz* tribe entered on a course of systematic brigandage and war, and, though a very small tribe, became quite powerful. Sulaimani became the scene of a tug of war between these various interests and the efforts of a saintly family of the Barzinja to reestablish some form of Pushdir. After the end of the First World War, conditions slowly became more

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stable, and official administrations, directed from Baghdad, grew in scope and progressively enlarged its area of effective control.

Such then is the background of the villages where the following material was collected. They are primarily tenant villages in the Sulaimani valley, or villages dominated by freeholding Hamawand farmers. However, certain aspects of local social structure become clear only by comparison with other situations — particularly those found in the *Jaf* areas — or by historical comparisons and deductions. The data on *Jaf* organization was obtained from a limited number of informants on short visits to various villages. For historical material, C. J. Rich's accounts (*op.cit*) have been found most useful.

I have tried to avoid bringing conditions and factors in the towns of Sulaimani, Chamchamal, Halabja, etc. into the picture. The enormous «Western» influences in these centres are extremely complicated and difficult to evaluate. In the intricacies of the class and caste system, differential contacts and reactions due to sub-cultures are indeed complex. The rural areas, on the other hand, show greater uniformity in patterns: the tribal areas are organized and separable, and the tenant villages, in their small, endogamous communities, have strong patterns of localism and traditionalism. [illegible] for every illustrating this localism: A donkey belonging to one of the tenant farmers in a village ran away; as the farmer followed it, to catch it. The donkey climbed up the hillside, far away from the village, but the farmer did not want to lose it. So he followed it high up into the mountains, never turning, and finally close to the mountain top he caught it. On turning around he saw below him the whole beautiful Shahr-i-zur plain, in which his own village lay. The peasant gasped and exclaimed: «I never knew the world was so vast!»

What goes on in the towns belongs, as far as most villagers are concerned, to a quite separate world, and it seemed both in the field and in working up the notes valid to separate off the Kurdish *countryside* as the area of study. But due to diversity even in this area, any attempt at giving a conventional anthropological description of «the culture of the society» must fail. Each of the compact, widely separated little villages shows characteristics of its own, local

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permutations of pan-Kurdish institutions, or traits derived from the specific setting and history of the particular village.

No one of these villages, however, is self-contained. Though each shows a high degree of self-sufficiency and endogamy, it is tied to others in a web of social relations, embracing the whole of Southern Kurdistan. Many institutions affecting large districts have their main focus in one or another of these local villages, not visibly different from the rest: the home village of the leader of the dervish brotherhood, that of a tribal leader, a rich landowner, a locally important mullah. Ordinary trade ties village to village and village to city; illegal tobacco trade follows back roads and high mountain passes in a web of its own. Thus no village is self-contained or separable in structural terms. Clearly, a larger unit of study than any one village is needed.

But as soon as one proceeds beyond the village level, complications arise. Social relations within the village are virtually continuous, and a constant set of relations and hierarchy of organization persists, or changes only slowly. Relations outside the village, on the other hand, are discontinuous. In such relations, there is a stronger tendency to press any immediate advantage to the limit. To this end, the individual attempts to manipulate a variety of competing institutions and norms, derived from tribal Kurdish, purely local, Arabic, Islamic, Persian, modern etc. cultural contexts. On the other hand, to give these relations the degree of permanence that they do have, some generally accepted principle must exist, or the social relations would break down (as they in fact do in the case of feud). — An attempt will be made to unravel the institutionalized forms that these inter-village relations take.

The internal organization of the village presents problems of a different kind. The great differences between villages make it meaningless to construct an average, typical or standard type of village organization. They may be classified according to type, the basic dichotomy being between those of freeholding, tribally organized farmers, and those of non-tribal, sharecropping tenants. But rather than construct an arbitrary number of types, it seems more fruitful to explain the existing diversity to discover co-variance of

institutional forms. Thereby the structural connections between various institutions and principles of organization should become clearer. It will be found that the principles that serve to organize the village are to large extent the same as those which are applied in the more inclusive systems of organization.

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Chapter I

Subsistence and kinship

SUBSISTENCE

§1 Subsistence patterns of the settled population are essentially uniform over the whole South Kurdish area. A long day is spent by the farmer in food producing activities, in part because of primitive techniques, in part because labor is invariably expended in preference to capital.

§§2 Subsistence is based on cereal agriculture, combined with herding
§§3 (cf. Table I). With an average yearly rainfall of 400—800 mm.,
§§4 concentrated mainly in a rainy season during winter and spring, artificial irrigation is only necessary for special crops, such as rice and tobacco. — Wheat and barley are of approximately equal importance; tobacco, rice, cotton, peas, lentils, and garden patches of vegetables are subsidiary. Of these, cotton is a recent innovation, and typical only of the tenant villages with an active and interested landowner.

§5 Among the domestic animals, sheep and goats are the important producers. Cattle are kept more for their use as work animals in plowing and threshing than for their products. Donkeys are used for all transportation, no wheeled vehicles are seen. The horse is primarily a prestige symbol, and has little economic use.

§6 Productive techniques are generally underdeveloped. Agricultural methods are exceedingly simple, especially with regard to the basic

TABLE I

LIVESTOCK AND FIELDS OF THE HOUSEHOLDS IN DICOW

Hadji Mashal	2	3	3	4	40	2	1	25	27	4	1.5	4
Mahmud	2	7	4	3	30	4	1	11	13	3	.5	3
Darwish Hasan	3	1	4	3	24	1	—	28	28	2	.5	4
Hadji Aziz	3	4	4	4	28	1	—	25	25	3	.5	3
Karim	3	3	2	3	—	3	—	10	10	2	.5	4
Darwish Mohamad	3	—	2	4	1	—	—		10	2	.5	3
Hasan	2	2	—	2	30	—	—	1	7	2	—	—
Ali	2	4	—	2	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
Rahman	2	3	—	—	—	—	—		2	—	—	—
single women	1	—	—	—	3	—	—		3	—	—	—
10 households, pop. 51				47	159	10	2		221	18	4	21

(areal measure 1 Dunum = 10 x 10 m. = ¼ hectare)

cereal crop. Much reliance is based on the general fitness of this crop to the area. Consequently, the yield is low, and a large area pr. capita must be brought under the plow.

To preserve, in some measure, the fertility of the soil, the fields are left fallow alternate years. These fallow fields should however be plowed at regular intervals, obviously at considerable labor cost. (cf. Appendix I). The plow itself is made of wood, with a conical iron cover over the point. It has a very low level of efficiency, and it is generally necessary to cross-plow all fields. In the hilly area, the slow moving oxen are the only draft animals, which further extends the period of labor. The outcome of this is that the Kurdish farmer spends a very great amount of time plowing, but which rather meagre results. Average return in wheat and barley seems to be c. 8/1 in an openly seeded field.

Reaping takes place, according to altitude, between May and July. The grain is cut with a short, curved sickle, and heaped on areas of hard rambaked clay by or in the field. Threshing is done by the oxen trampling the heaped grain, winnowing with a simple wooden fork.

249 As contrasted to grain, where most of the work comes either in
312 winter plowing or harvesting, the subsidiary crops which require irrigation take constant attention in the growing season. The irrigation system of tiny dikes and channels in a tobacco field is at best a rather temporary one, and must be constantly repaired and reinforced. The flow of water must be started and stopped periodically, and one rarely sees a tobacco field in summer without some farmer with his long handled irrigation shovel, fussing with the watering system.

233 Herding involves much less work, and the supervision of the flocks can easily be delegated. In the hills, the herdsman is supported by dogs. Morning and evening milking is not too time consuming, and even under quite extreme conditions winter fodder is never provided for the animals, so these very few man-hours are expended.

LAND TENURE.

423 The characteristics of subsistence and available techniques should
471 to a considerable extent influence the size and composition of economically cooperating groups and work-gangs, and thereby the form of the households. As is evident, however, the above type of activities lays down few imperatives and requires no cooperative division of labor in the fields. Furthermore, the additional factor of land ownership intervenes, and influences group composition according to other principles.

Any comprehensive discussion of land tenure in the area, however, takes on considerable complexity. Property rights have never been mapped and settled (overall mapping and registration is now in progress), and conflicting interpretations and claims are advanced in the various contexts of modern legislation, Ottoman land codes, tribal political organization, or de-facto power. For the moment, we may disregard the historical factors leading up to the present situation, and discuss only those factors that influence division of labor and social classes.

As far as the farmer is concerned, the basic contrast is between a/ land owned by himself, or land belonging to the government, but to which he has traditional usufruct rights, and b/ land on which

he himself is considered a tenant farmer — the land belonging to an absentee landowner, a tribal chief, or some privileged section of the local community. The typical situation is for the freeholding farmers to have retained what is generally called *tribal organization* (see below), whereas the tenant farmer has no clear political affiliation, but is largely subject to the control of the landowner. This dichotomy between the tribal, freeholding farmer and the tenant, more or less dependent on a capitalist for land and other privileges, is basic to much of the following discussion. The dichotomy is clearly made by Kurds themselves, and is associated with the co-existence of other institutional forms.

The characteristic tendency on the land which does not directly belong to the farmer who is using it, is a progressive delegation of rights. This influences the division of labor and the form of work-groups in the fields, and reinforces class differences.

In the tribal villages, each farmer generally works his own fields with own equipment, or may hire some outside labor to assist him at certain times of year (harvest, harrowing, or sowing, of livestock may be resorted to). The farming area belongs to the village as a whole, and herding the animals generally delegated to one or more full-time shepherds of low status, who may serve the whole village.

The land of the typical tenant village belongs to an absentee landowner, who claims 1/10—1/5 of the cereal crop by right. The old residents of the village have inherited inherited right of use of certain fields. These are not inalienable. Any person needing more land may apply to the landowner, and if he can demonstrate that he is able to use more, he will be shown fallow land that formerly belonged to other households [illegible] and the need is great, e. g. due to increase in the size of a given family, any type of land may be transferred. Theoretically, the landowner has the right to evict any one for any reason — though this is a power he rarely exercises, since it generally precipitates conflicts and disrupts village unity.

Not infrequently, the many well-to-do tenant farmer will in fact do no farming himself, but will hire labor in his fields for a share of the crop, or other payments. Such payments are traditionally

stipulated, e. g. for reaping 1/6 of the wheat crop, 1/3 of barley
for plowing, food plus 100 fils/day (= 2 shillings)
or 150 fils/day and no food.

The large landowner may rent out the rights to a certain village or area for a limited period of time to some intermediary capitalist for a small fee plus 1/2 of the intermediary capitalist's profits. This intermediary is then free to stipulate the share of the tenants' crop he wishes to collect as rent for the year. The number of non-productive links in the chain from the laborer on the fields to the ultimate landowner may thus become quite considerable, and the

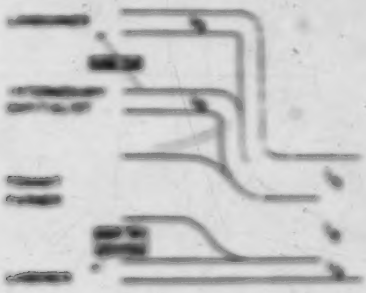

Diagram No. 1. Shares in division of a cereal crop.

division of the crop might be as illustrated in Diagram 1. More frequently, however, the intermediary capitalist is missing in the hierarchy, and the landowner, collecting direct from his tenants, is content with the smaller, traditional share of 1/3 of the crop on an irrigated land.

At harvest time, a characteristic work-gang in the grainfields of a tenant village will consequently consist of [illegible] made up of migratory labor, cutting the grain, and young women carrying it up the threshing place. Threshing and winnowing, on the other hand, are generally the work of only two men; plowing is usually a solitary occupation.

According to the irrigation of the tobacco-fields usually follows a different pattern. The various farmers who share a certain watering system either send it each in turn, or one man among them may [illegible] major irrigation[illegible].

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take on the major responsibility. In tobacco picking, all the women and children of the village take part.

Rice cultivation usually takes place far from the village, if it is pursued at all. Rice requires a quite well developed irrigation system, connected with a dependable perennial stream, usually in the main valley bottom. The growing season is long, generally said to last some seven months. Persons living close to the fields are hired to tend the rice, and 1/3 of the crop is collected by the landowner as tax. It is therefore an expensive crop, but is considered to be the finest kind of food, and has considerable prestige value. In Table I, village status groups are indicated by the size of individual rice crops.

ECONOMIC CLASSES.

The system of progressive delegation of land rights in the peasant village, referred to above with respect to the basic food crop, is in considerable measure responsible for the lack of efficiency in agricultural techniques and the low level of capital investment in equipment. Each person in the chain from labourer to landowner is only interested in obtaining his part return, not in further investments. An example might illustrate the point.

Threshing is generally done with six oxen, without any mechanical appliance or equipment. There does however exist a quite efficient thresher (mentioned by Leach, 1949) which could greatly reduce the customary expenditure of oxen-hours. The value of this thresher was given as £ 12, its life approximately 20 years. It is generally considered that 2 males working 3 days with the thresher do an equivalent of 6 oxen working 10 days without it. If we, to simplify comparison, equate the work value of a male with that of an ox, that gives a reduction to 1/3 in oxen hours with [illegible] energy. Though the gain thus seems quite spectacular, the thresher is in fact very rarely seen. The labourer himself has no capital to invest in equipment. The peasant farmer pays the labourer the customary share for doing the threshing, whether it is one way or an other, and is certainly not interested in assuming any further expenses. Continuing up the hierarchy, there is no greater incentive to such investments for the intermediary or the landowner. Consid-

549 ably, the laborer might save or borrow enough money to procure a
281 chember, and then be in a position to take on more work and thus increase his income. What the laborer with access to such capital in fact does, however, is to become a tenant farmer by obtaining the minimal equipment necessary for farming. He then rises one notch in the class hierarchy, and may employ laborers in the peak season of the harvest!

A class distinction is thus constantly reinforced within each village by these dispositions of capital and labor, dividing it into the distinct groups of tenant farmers and laborers — *sefwa* (harvestmen) in Kurdish terms. Prerequisite to being a tenant farmer is a minimum capital (1951) of ca. £ 90: 2 oxen at £ 10-15, plowing equipment £ 10, seed pr. dunum of land ca. £ 1. In addition comes the normal stock of productive animals for household use, of which the harvestmen also generally have a certain number.

The frequency of tenant farmers doing all or a major part of the agricultural work themselves was not ascertained, but it is certainly quite high. Thus the daily routine of field labor, and similarly the organization of household units, is essentially similar for the two classes, the tenant farmers and the laborers.

This two-class distinction is sufficient as far as the tenant village is concerned. The landowner and his family, occupying a third class position, are usually residents of a nearby larger town. In the tribal village, a similar two-class distinction tends to grow up between freeholding tribal farmers and conquered non-tribal tenants, though often the situation becomes more complex (see below).

HOUSEHOLDS.

499 (Nel) The division of labor in the village is thus to a certain extent regulated by a two-class system. But the main division of economic roles and responsibilities is found within each household unit. The household is economically independent, and consists typically of one elementary family: husband, wife, and their children. Among these, the economic roles are distributed along the same lines that will be familiar from rural Europe. It should be unnecessary to enumerate these in detail. The male finds most of his work in the fields; his

The male finds most of his work in the fields, his SK2
is also the privilege of looking after the horse. The other animals are tended by the women, who do the milking and preparing of food, and other household duties, including usual plastering of the house interior every fall. The roof on the other hand is kept in repair by the men. In the busy season the women also assist in the fields, especially during the grain harvest and in tobacco picking. The smaller children share in these latter tasks, and, among less well-to-do people at least, serve as shepherds for the smaller flocks. There is also a series of smaller jobs, such as collecting dung for fuel alone the paths and cow-tracks.

Table II.

COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLDS IN FOUR KURDISH VILLAGES

[592 A2]

	non-tribal		tribal			
	Kurd Barzi	Hawkare	Kurd Barzi	Turgesh		
widow and children	3	10	3	3	19	16
elementary family (and plural wives)	28	24	5	8	57	
+ husband's mother	3	1	1	1	6	93 = 77 %
+ husband's mother and unmarried siblings	1	1	—	—	6	
+ husband's unmarried siblings	—	3	2	2	7	
+ husband's father and unmarried siblings	3	—	—	—	3	13 = 10 %
patrilineal extended family	3	4	1	3	10	
other (incomplete families)	—	9	2	3	14	
Total number of families					120	

574

The general form of the Kurdish village households may be seen in Table II. Only 10 % of the households could be called patrilineal extended families, vs. 77 % consisting of an elementary family or a group of dependents maintained by an elementary family. Each household is an independent economic unit, except for a certain insurance in the form of the obligations to support survivors in

97. case of bereavement and need. This obligation supposedly passes to nearest agnatic male relative, but practice is in fact very elastic, and follows reasonable arguments of evidence and means.

Since each household is generally based on one elementary family, the marriage tie is the pivot on which household organization rests.

98. The verbalized theory on choice of spouse is quite simple. A man decides he wants to marry a certain girl — any girl. He chooses a reliable representative — preferably an older male relative — and the representative visits the father of the girl and makes the proposition. Considerable subtle diplomacy is performed by both sides in fixing a tentative brideprice. If the young man accepts the price, preparations proceed. The importance of the representative is evidently considerable. In one case, a laborer who was a transient in the area chose to send two representatives he did not know very well to a potential father-in-law whom he in fact knew better. The answer seems to lie in the better bargaining position of an outsider — he is freer to eulogize the virtues of the groom.

99. Theoretically, you may propose to marry any girl. In practice, there is a strong preference for FaBrDa marriage. Certainly a FaBrDa is considered to have first right of refusal. The case of the above mentioned transient laborer brings out the point: He was refused because, said the girl's father of sacrificial ox, brother's sons will kill me if I give her to you.[1])

The rationalizations and manifest reasons for this preferential marriage pattern are of several types. The father's interest in his daughter is used as an explanation for his preference of a BrSo as a son-in-law: he knows the nephew's possible shortcomings, which reduces the risk of mis-matching. Furthermore, he would be able to exert some influence over the groom after marriage, through the [illegible] his daughter's interests. It is further usually said that she is content [illegible] for the nephew to pay only a

[1]) The same transient laborer had on a previous occasion in another area been refused a girl on similar grounds, although in this case he threatened to murder her if she was not given to him. The girl was indeed killed shortly afterwards, and the laborer spent a period of time in jail till he was released due to lack of evidence.

reduced brideprice, or none at all; so from the point of view of the potential groom, the incentive to cousin marriage is considerable. No rationalization of the pattern in terms of the Koranic approval of close kin marriage was ever advanced in conversations on the subject — in fact, the contrary was occasionally claimed. — We shall return later to some more basic factors relating to this marriage pattern.

Any special preference for FaBeDa as against the other three types of cousins was denied, and the higher incidence of FaBeDa marriage was explained by the fact that there were more of them. This is in fact true, as far as the local village is concerned. A certain amount of inter-village marriage does take place. Marriage being ambrel in the man's village or occasionally patrilocal, all Fabi's children will be living in your own village, whereas a certain number of those related to you through a female will reside in other villages.

The frequency of marriage with actual, non-classificatory cousins is very high, ranging around 40 % in many of the villages studied (see Table 1). Considering that any irregularity in sex or age distribution of cousins must affect the opportunities for cousin marriage adversely, 40 % is probably close to the practical maximal frequency which such a marriage form can ever attain.

A second type of marriage is the *skin-for-skin* (= sister exchange). In such cases of course the bride price is eliminated by the reciprocity of the two men exchanging their sisters with one another, and only the expenses immediately connected with the marriage celebration and ceremonies remain. From the purely financial point of view, the sister exchange is thus advantageous, and may in a sense be regarded as an extension of the FaBeDa marriage pattern within the village community. In the non-tribal villages, such marriages are fairly frequent. On other counts, however, they are not considered too satisfactory. Where no close kin ties exist between the two men performing the exchange, the chances of disruption of the unions are [illegible] loyalty between spouses, as domestic difficulties in the one household are said to produce similar conflicts in the other household, in a vicious circle.

58 [57] In the case of a marriage between non-relatives, where no direct exchange of women is arranged, the brideprice is quite high, running from £ 50 to 100 — and these prices are in fact paid. This is considered to correspond to the actual economic value of a woman, as an obligation — e. g. a return marriage in the next generation — remains. Because of the size of the sum involved, it is often vital for the young man to avoid full payment, and the high incidence of cousin marriage, as well as of sister exchange, may be seen partly as a result of this.

It is on the other hand more difficult to explain how the father can be willing to forego his right to a brideprice in the case of a nephew. His household is quite separate from that of his brother and nephew, and non-payment of brideprice constitutes a direct cut loss. The origins of the rule might conceivably be sought in a now passed patrilineal extended family organization, where transfer of property between brothers would be meaningless. Today, the pattern is an established privilege of certain categories of relatives, enforced by those who profit from it. And the right is indeed enforced, as indicated by the statements of the father, cited above, and by the not infrequent murder of girls refusing their cousins (e. g. Hay, 1921 p. 71). Stories of such conflicts are very popular among Kurds, and the occasional horrific reminders serve to ensure the privilege.

Probably the most fundamental consideration inducing a man to give his daughter to a brother's son has the character of a positive sanction, and is connected with the feud, and political power in general. In essence, it may be summarized as follows: A man's power is proportional to the number of followers he can mobilize to support his cause. Especially in the feud situation, these alignments of younger men around an older leader are in lineage terms. If a man has alienated his nephews by denying them their traditional rights, he will have great difficulties rallying them in time of need. A marriage between his daughter and a brother's son contributes positively to prevent such alienation of collateral branches. No other son-in-law — on this occasion, since a man is not expected to be responsible for his affinals' feud attitude. The only persons who can be expected to give such political support are co-lineage males. — After a descrip-

tion of the Kurdish lineage organization we shall return to a more complete discussion of these interrelations (pp. 49 ff).

Plural wives are rather uncommon in the villages, though they are thought to be a quite desirable investment for the men who can afford it. The average incidence for 94 men in 4 villages runs c. 4 %. The levirate is not infrequently practised, but more as a convenience than as an established rule or right. Unless the widow has a well established father or brother, she tends to remain in the house of her late husband under the protection of her brother-in-law, in which case he might as well have some return for his expenses. Strict observance of the Islamic rule of unlawful conjunction however prevents him from doing this if his first wife is a close relative of the widow (and where cousin marriage is common, this will be a fairly frequent limitation). The sororate is not known as a marriage practice.

587

[591]

KINSHIP.

593

A positional system of rights and privileges organizes the household group. Following Moslem ideals, the adult male has complete control, and can make any decisions he sees fit. This Islamic rule seems slightly to exceed Kurdish popular feeling on the matter. It is very difficult to obtain any impression of the internal workings of a Moslem family, but one has the feeling that Kurdish women have considerable influence in the close family circle. Occasionally this even carries outside the kinship group, so a woman may come to occupy a high political position. Similarly, the father's absolute authority is strongly questioned by the sons, as indicated by the frequency of unilocal residence. There are almost irresistible tensions connected with the setting up of an independent household for a married son — the father tends to resist the reduction of his power, and for the son it takes on the color of breaking free and becoming fully adult. However, with normal emotions and de-facto power supporting sons, the latter gradually complete the normal position — authority and organizer of the group.

In the case of a widow with one or several sons, the household is named after the major son, and the actual position of authority

603 passed on in the male line. But the mother does generally retain some recognized and actual authority by virtue of her parental position. There is a general feeling that the tie between mother and son should be close and intimate. In the case of divorced or discarded plural wives, the woman will normally, if she has an established son, become an honored member of her son's household. But the nominal succession should certainly pass in the male line, and only where there is no male member above puberty will the household carry a woman's name. If only for economic reasons, this is a quite rare situation.

The daughter is entirely subject to her father's authority. He functions as her marriage guardian, and even has the right to impose marriage on her — according to Islamic law only before puberty, but in practice also later. The position as marriage guardian — giving the right to receive the bridegrice — passes on the death of the father to the girl's nearest male agnatic relative. In Shafi law, that is first to her grandfather, second to her brother. Only father and grandfather, however, have the legal right to impose marriage.

Between brothers, relations of supra- and sub-ordination are determined by relative power. In the early years, this means physical power, and is closely connected with relative age. There is, however, no rule of succession, either primo- or ultimogeniture, and the relative positions of brothers are at any time decided by de-facto power and force of personality.

604 This positional system has further kinship ramifications, best seen in connection with the actual system of kinship terminology. Diagram 2. a) The child's relations with the grandparents are usually mediated through one of the parents, e. g. the son accompanies his mother on her frequent visits to her paternal household. In this situation authority and control over the child remains with the mother, and the relationship grandmother-grandchild is generally indulgent. The term *mamik* or *nanne* then also has an extended usage as a term of endearment to all older women of the village. Relations with the grandfather, especially the paternal grandfather, will be
605 ——— tempered with respect. b) The other special relationship is with *mam*, father's brother. This term again is used in an extended meaning towards older men to indicate a relationship of closeness

[606 continues on p. 32]

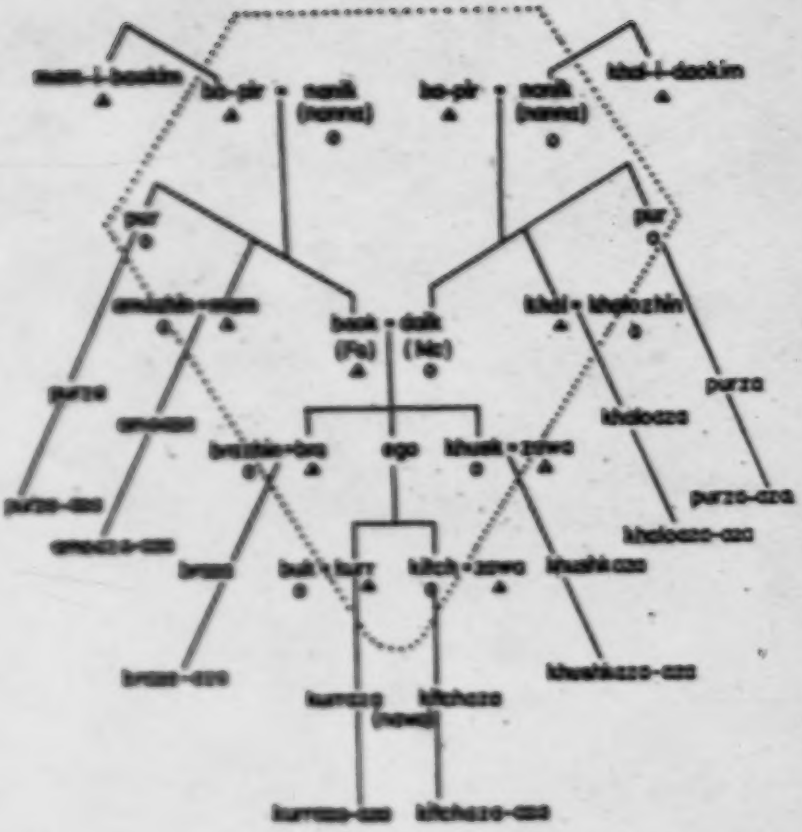

Diagram No. 2.
South Kurdish kinship terms,
Sulaimani dialect.

7: Barth E-5 (1951) 1953 9011 Kurd 9011

604 best respect. This and the above use of *mamo* is however in no real sense of the term a classificatory usage, any more than is 'Ma' in colloquial American or *farbror* in Swedish, the latter having connotations very parallel to *mamo*. As a potential father-in-law, one's *mamo* is an important relative, and a friendly relationship will secure one's right to his daughter and release from brideprice obligations.

171 604 An interesting contrast to Kurdish intimacy with Fallr and his descendants is evident from Afghan usage, where the word for Mollr.'s children is synonymous with friends and Fallr.'s children with enemies, this in spite of a probably otherwise similar social structure.[1]) The general explanation for such strained relations with Fallr.'s relatives lies in the potential conflict connected with inheritance, where Mollr.'s children are less important as competitors. The prevalence of FallrDe marriage in Kurdish villages undoubtedly serves to gloss over these tensions.

606 Affinal relations are, as far as the male is concerned, of secondary importance, and the basic terms for spouse's father, mother, adult brother and adult sister suffice. The woman, except for these terms, adopts the kinship designations of her husband, usually with the given name of the person appended. Children are called by their given names. — The general nature of in-law relationships is indicated by the proverb: *Khuda bida mavjim, tawa neka berjim* = God let me die, rather than be dependent on son-in-law (or brother-in-law).

Certain affinal relations are designated by suffixing *-xiw* (woman) to the term for their agnatically related husband. The resulting terms, *mamxiw* (= wife-of-Fallr) etc., seem to be used as actual kinship terms. The parallel usage of 'husband-of-so-and-so' is purely descriptive and does not constitute a term in itself. Son's wife is called «bride» and husband of sister and daughter is called «groom».

601 A striking feature of the Kurdish kinship system is the small number of basic terms, totalling only twelve. The group of relatives covered by these terms is a bilateral kin group, and includes all individuals in the elementary families of which ego or ego's parents

[1]) I am indebted to Prof. Morgenstierne for drawing my attention to this contrast.

are members during their lives. The suffix *-ana*, literally *-child of*, *-born of*, indicates removal by one descending generation from this group; repetition of the term indicates two generations' removal. Thus son's son is *kayrana*, while *Fulfi-Dulfa*, a frequent substitute with whom a closer relative is unavailable, is *ancestor-ana*. Ascending generations are categorized by constructing similar bilateral units with ego's father or grandfather in the position of ego. They may thus be described in several ways, according to the type of relation one wishes to stress. E. g. *Fulfulfa* may be *bra-i-kayrana*, brother-of-my-grandfather, or more commonly *mam-i-kayrana*, uncle-of-my-father. 60

So much for the structure of the family and household. The village community, in which these activities take place and relations exist, will be described more fully at a later point, (p. 111 ff). Suffice it here to say that in physical layout it is a very compact, small unit, located close to or within the village agricultural lands. Usually placed on a hill, one will tend to find the un-irrigated fields of loess and basalt above the village, higher up in the valleyside. Irrigated tobacco and vegetable plots, where such are found, generally depend on the same source of water as the village itself, and are thus found close around and below it; while the dryland grainfields usually cover the flats in the valley bottom. The village grazing grounds may be quite large, stretching from the fallow fields in the valley bottom to the top of the ridge which divides this valley from the next. And the limits of the village lands are the limits within which most life activities take place. 241

Chapter II.

Formal political organization

[69] The preceding chapter has dealt with some basic factors in the culture and social organization of the settled population of Southern Kurdistan, essentially uniform over the whole area. Political organization, on the other hand, shows great regional variation, the tribal types being built on the lineage principle (cf. p. 18), others disregarding descent in a non-tribal, *feudal* organization, which is based on residential groups only.

The Kurdish application of the principle of patrilineal descent in organizing the largely endogamous descent groups, or lineages, in a larger political structure, will be discussed first with respect to the nomadic *Jaf* group. The organization of the settled *Hawramani* agriculturists is essentially similar, and demonstrates the tendency toward segmentation, especially visible where such a lineage organization is found among settled villagers. These tribal systems are contrasted with the formal organization of the non-tribal villages of the Sulaimani area. Some uniform principles are found in all types of Kurdish political organization; these will be discussed, and an attempt will be made to show how they operate in a more extensive and segmentary feudal type of organization.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF THE JAF.[1])

The *Jaf* is a powerful federation of tribes, until recently almost wholly nomadic, and still counting among its members a majority of

[1]) For data on *Jaf* organization, I am indebted to the *Jaf Beg* of Halabja and to the Emir of the Warda Shaw tribe.

the nomads in the South Kurdish area. Their traditions place their origins in the Djezero area of Persian Kurdistan, where in fact some 10—12 Jaf tribes still live. About 250 years ago, the tensions between the Shi'i Persian government and the Sunni Jaf precipitated conflict, and the tribes which refused subjection were unable to defend themselves, and fled across the border to the Sunni Ottoman Empire. This group of migrants is said to have counted some 700 families. They were given pastures close to the Persian frontier, which they in turn served to prepare. As a result of natural growth, and by assimilation of small and broken tribes into their organization, the group grew to the present total of some 40,000 persons. Up till 35—40 years ago, they had remained nomadic. At the present time the nomadic section make up only a small fraction of the total, numbering some 2—3000 individuals.

The annual migration of the nomadic Jaf carries them ca. 250 km. from their winter camps on the plains to the summer pastures in the high mountains. Unlike the otherwise similar Central Asiatic nomads, the Jaf have no permanent houses for winter use, but live in their black tents all year. Agricultural pursuits are rare, and generally only involve hiring a man to raise a crop of grain, or renting out land to the farmers. More typically, the economy is purely pastoral.

AGHIRET. There is some vagueness as to the Kurdish classification of the Jaf unit. If one asks a solitary Jaf to what tribe, tira, he belongs, he will tend to answer Jaf. On the other hand, Jaf informants outlining the political structure were unwilling to use the term *tira* for the whole group, and preferred to reserve it for the next smaller unit: the various sections making up the Jaf group. Usually the Arabic term *Ashiret* was preferred, having reference both to a people and to an area (cf. Leach, op.cit., p. 11). Obviously, this is a slight misapplication, considering that the nomadic Jaf share their area with a number of other groups. Due to the above mentioned historical process of growth by assimilation, the Jaf today constitute a federation of groups of diverse origin. They themselves make the distinction between *asraw* Jaf and later assimilated groups, but have no special term or organization for the *asraw* Jaf.

For lack of a better term, the Jaf confederacy as a whole should

[illegible] then probably be called an *askeret*. The *askeret* is ruled by a recognized leader, the *Beg* or *Pasha*. He is the head of the *ceylak* family, the *Begzade*. The size of the *askeret* unit was considerable, even before section of it became sedentary. In 1838, while still entirely nomadic, the *Jaf* could muster 1000 infantry and 100 horse, and were said to number several thousand families (Rich op. cit., p. 180, conflicting with his statement on p. 112).

[illegible] 7738.6. The *Jaf askeret* is divided into a number of tribes, five. The various lists of these component five conflict slightly in names and total numbers, but a characteristic enumeration of *Jaf* five is:

(1) [illegible] group
- [illegible] (Sorde) Shaw
- Shiwan
- Shaw-i-Bedan
- Jaaf-Ajam
- Baba-Ajam
- Kaleki

(2) Shaw
(3) Sabak
(4) Babaka
(5) Gelak
(6) Tarikhan
(7) Baghlank
(8) Shaywak
(9) Amaka
(10) Shaw-i-Jaaf
(11) Shaikh Yusuf
- Shaikh Yusuf
- Bandian

The *tire* is the primary political group and landowning unit. Membership in a *tire* is patrilineally inherited, and the *tire* itself approximates a maximal lineage. But though all members of the *tire* should be able to trace patrilineal descent from one common ancestor, it may frequently become difficult to determine the connection between some of the major kinship segments in any one *tire*. And, on the other hand, every maximal lineage is not automatically regarded a *tire*; the concept is fundamentally based on political [illegible] and territory. A functioning [illegible]

unit and assume a functioning organization. A single descent group or lineage is in Kurdish called *ber*; *Mam-i-Kaka-Hawreu* is simply the family, all the descendants in male line from Kaka Hawreu, and not a *tire* in any sense of the word. However, since the concept of the genealogically defined lineage group is important in the definition of the *tire*, and, in fact, ideally the whole basis of it, a certain continuing interchange of the terms might be expected. In the above list, *Mam-i-Jarwais*, the family or descendants of Jarwais, serves as the name of a *tire*; but this group is a *tire* by virtue of its organization as a political unit, not merely because relationship in a large *ber*, founded by Jarwais, has been recognized.

Further confusion may result from the use of Arabic synonyms for the Kurdish terms. Leach (op. cit., p. 13 ff) unsuccessfully attempts to make a distinction, based on size of the unit, between *tire* and *taifa*, the latter being in fact an Arabic term for *ber*, family.

The term *tire* is regularly used for tribes and tribal sections of highly variable size, and seems to refer to the political unit of the size which is significant in the context of immediate discussion. Thus the salaried *ğaf* will tell strangers that he is of the *ğaf tire*, while among a group of *ğaf* the term *tire* will have reference to subtribe or branch.

Each *tire* in the above list is led by a hereditary *Rais* (leader), and has traditional rights to specific pastures and cropping sites. These grazing rights are usually exclusive, or they may be shared with local villagers, who raise a crop in the spring and let the *ğaf* flocks graze there in the fall. Formerly, this relation between nomad and sedentary might be established by force by the *ğaf* on any land, but some rent is generally paid to the local farmers in return for right to pasturage. The migrations of the whole *ğaf* subtribe are coordinated, and the movements of each *tire* is regulated by its *Rais*, who serves as intermediary between his group and the *Beyrada* leaders of the whole subtribe.

BRANCHES. With the internal growth of population in one *tire*, or due to tensions and conflicts within it, a branch may split off and become an independent unit. This group then traces descent from the parent group, but is formally independent. In the above

4/9 lar, the Bamidjo are such a branch, which has split off from the parent, Sheikh Ismail Ibn. The Shemi group of Ibn, on the other hand, are all sons of one father, and no one of the Ibn takes precedence. Such groups have more than mere legendary unity. Firstly, as shareholders, they have the right of inheritance to each others' persons and campsites, in the case of one of the Ibn dying
4/3 out. There is also a minimum of political coordination: in the case of war or other far-reaching decisions, the leaders of all Shemi Ibn meet in a council. In that no one of them should have an advantage, the council meets in the men of a rich follower, not in the men of any one Ibn. The council reaches agreement by discussion, and has, as a body, no formal powers.

4/2 KHEL. Through the two kabila grazing rights in common, it will rarely camp in one unit, but generally divides into several separate encampments, each called a khel. The khel may vary in size and composition, but may roughly be regarded as a lineage segment. It is, however, held together by economic as well as lineage ties. Hired shepherds etc. may thus belong to a specific khel without being members of the Jid subset, or economic partnership between persons of different lineage segments may temporarily influence khel membership. The khel is led by an older man, more or less informally elected or granted authority because he is the person with the greatest power and prestige. The khel is thus primarily a residence unit, and is less permanent in its composition than the larger units which are based on descent only.

HOUSEHOLDS. Each khel in turn is made up of a number of households, frequently some 20—30, each inhabiting a separate tent.
7/2 The households seem to have roughly the same size and composition as those of the ordinary village Kurds, described above. If a father can afford the necessary expenses in tent and utensils, he will set up an independent household for his married son. Poor people, on the other hand, may find this impossible. — Marriage is preferably with FaBrDa or other close relatives, very rarely outside the Ibn. Bridegroom varies from 1 200 to occasionally nothing in the case of close relatives. Payment may take any form, either in kind or cash, but is computed in terms of money.

This whole framework of formal organization may be diagrammatically illustrated as below, Diagram 3.

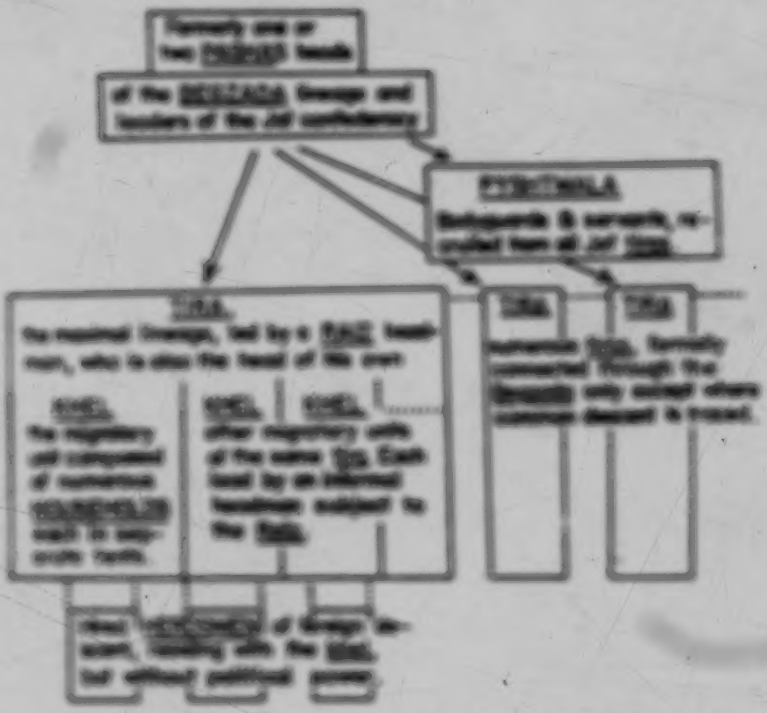

Diagram No. 3: Formal organization of the ensemble [of]

Within the tribal, wealth, primarily in the form of herds, is the main source of power. Any member of the tira has unlimited grazing rights for his flocks, as there is no legal limit to the accumulation of wealth. The camels are herded in flocks of 100 or so, with one herdsman for each flock. Herdsmen are preferably hired among the poor people of the tira, or they may be clansmen associated with the tribal purely because of their economic functions. The typical pattern is to exploit poor relatives for this purpose, a practice familiar from Classical Islamic sources (e. g. Hinchen, 1918, p. 17). Self-

Self-

549 reporting men should not engage in economic pursuits, their main
451 role was formerly that of warriors, protecting the people and flocks
454 from attacks by other groups. Only the very poor herded their own
cattle. Where one person does not own enough animals to make up
the normal herding unit of 100, composite herds are created along
kinship lines, with father, brother, mare, etc. Differences in wealth
are tremendous, apparently on a continuous scale, some persons
owning a total of 2,000 animals, some as few as 10, some quite
destitute and dependent on richer relatives for subsistence and work.

451 With the tendency towards parallel cousin marriage, every group
449 tends to split up into separate lineages, which continue separate over
long periods of time. Thus semi-endogamous sections are created
within the tire tsalit, usually identified with separate khel. But
since the khel is a residential unit, the main unity of which [illegible]
from economic ties, persons of any lineage section may travel for
longer or shorter periods with any khel to which their economic
activities might attach them. Generally, one of these semi-endogamous
lineage sections will form the wealthy core of a khel, to which a
more or less variable group of less privileged families, related or not,
are connected by economic ties.

452 These endogamous tendencies are also operative in the family of
449 the Rais. The position as Rais is inherited, and the family of the
451 Rais therefore takes on the appearance of a noble clan or caste. The
process by which such a caste would truly emerge, however, would
be through intermarriage with the wealthy lineage segments of other
tribes. There seem to fact to be few such kinship ties established
between Rais families of different groups. A certain number of
marriages will be exogamous as far as the Rais family is concerned,
if only from the occasional lack of available spouses in the limited
family group. But these exogamous marriages more frequently establish ties between the Rais and wealthy lineage segments among the
commoners within the tire tsalit. It would thus seem that marriages are manipulated to reinforce the power of the Rais within the
tire tsalit, rather than to separate him off as a member of a dominant and noble caste. To unify a distinction between noblemen and
commoners within the tire would thus be an error, since the separ-

cause of the Ruti lineage follows from common marriage usage, and is no different in nature from the appearance of the wealthier as compared to the poorer lineage sections of the group.

The hereditary position as Ruti is simply vested in the leading lineage segment of the tra. An interesting problem arises as to what adjustments are made in the event of decline in wealth or the appearance of other impediments to leadership in this lineage. It is customary for persons in a position of leadership to appoint their successor, usually a son, while they are still in a position of control. In the case of disagreement between the existing Ruti and the general population as to who should succeed him, the pattern of succession is probably decided by the bias in the balance between the positive power (primarily economic) of the Ruti, and the degree of general resistance to his decision. Where the power and prestige of the Ruti has declined, leadership might thus fairly easily be shifted to a younger and wealthier collateral line. (Compare p. 126 for a more nearly democratic mechanism of appointing successor to the Ruti.)

I had no opportunity to ascertain the actual extent of the power vested in the Ruti. It would seem to be rather dependent on his means and personality, but, these permitting, to afford him considerable possibilities to enforce his decisions. He is on the other hand regarded as being subject to the Beje in all matters, and directly responsible to them.

The Beje leaders of the Jal are sometimes represented as belonging to a tra of their own, the Bejanda; more correctly the Bejanda is regarded as a family or lua, divided into the three branches Wellad Beji, Kikhawa Beji, and Bahwan Beji. The political head may be drawn from any of them. The Kikhawa Beji and Bahwan Beji of today are descended by 7 generations from the common ancestor Lebo Beji. The Wellad Beji are somewhat further removed. All the Bejanda are now settled and live as absentee landowners at numerous Jal and other villages. It is thus extremely difficult to form any picture of the true position of the leaders in the political organization of the nomadic Jal. Some 40 years ago, authority was divided between the two Bejanda brothers Osman and Mohamad Fadu, the latter being the leader of the nomadic section. Mohamad Fadu was

(47) the law of the leaders to follow the nomads on their annual migrations. Today the 2—3000 who have remained nomads receive only slight attention. A description of the Jal Beg at the time of Rich, (op. cit.) in 1820, pictures him with considerable sympathy as a powerful and despotic patriarchal ruler. A similar exhalted position is indicated for 1908 by Bonn's description of the Pathe receiving the first recruitment of the season, rushed to him on a foaming horse over some 10 dusty kilometres. (Bonn, 1913, p. 207).

(48) An important institution reinforcing the powers of the Begraab is the Pyahtwala (= around-the-horse), a group of men recruited from all over, who possess and perform service in the home of the Beg, and used to serve as bodyguard. As well as constituting a type of bread tax, the group paralleled the Viking *hird* in form and function, being constantly at hand to maintain the Beg's position, effectively and immediately executing his orders. The composite origin of the group, and the fact that it included members of all tribes, made the Pyahtwala more readily subject to discipline than a group recruited on any other principles, and prevented the Beg from the need to create dangerous factionalism and intrigue feud by using one traditional tribe organization to control an other.

(49) The functions of the Jal confederacy, and the reasons for its permanence where similar organizations among settled people have been at best very ephemeral, pose interesting problems. Presumably, the direct advantages to all the nomads of a large confederacy have always been evident enough to encourage a decision to the annual assembly of the Beg. These advantages were considerably greater for the nomads than they would be for the settled tribes. Firstly, since all the property of the nomad is movable, he may lose everything if he is raided, where the farmer at worst loses one year's crop. Secondly, a high degree of concentration of population is possible at temporary rest-stops, whereas the agriculturalists commonly live in smaller, more widely scattered communities. Given the social mechanisms, there were thus no physical obstacles to large groups of nomads driving their flocks together and waiting for defence in case of raids while the villagers, to protect their property, were forced to remain scattered over the countryside. Thirdly, a large

organized unit gave a direct economic advantage to the pastoralists in their relations with the settled population. The Jel, by concentrating men and animals, were able to dominate an whole villages, tyrannizing the local villagers by their larger numbers, and freely graze their flocks on pastures and fields belonging to the settled people. 492

This subsidiary was admittedly not based on any lineage principle of common descent, since it counts among its members women as well; yet all Jel insist that the ruling position of the Rejaale lineage has never been questioned. The fact that a council even of such Jel's as were common descent rarely contributes to stability. Furthermore, the Rejaale group may have been large enough so there would constantly be a number of pretenders to the position as leader of the subtribe. Thus, if the pressure of exploitation became too great, the commoners could give their support to a competing pretender within the royal lineage, who would then be in a position to gain ascendancy.

The formal position of the Jel Rejaale is thus conceptually different from that of the Rulers of the segmentary lines. The leaders of these and their segments are ordained, and should ideally have their power as informal sanctions. This conceptionable type of authority seems to be inherent in the principles on which a segmentary lineage organization is based. E. g. Evans (1951) discusses the organization of the Cyrenaica Bedouin in terms of the opposition of lineage segments of a like order of segmentation, and emphasizes the absence of a real hierarchy of political offices. Any Bedouin sheikh of a primary section must necessarily also belong to a specific secondary and tertiary section within it, and he can function as informal leader of the other sub-sections in his primary section only when it is in opposition to another primary section; in other situations, the unity of the primary section breaks down. The only way leadership can be established and a hierarchy of authority established is by divorcing the super-ordained leader and his group from the segmentary structure of the tribe as a whole. This is achieved in the case of the Jel Rejaale by elevating that whole lineage group to a semi-royal status. In relation to the Cyrenaica Bedouin, the Sanusi may for a time have occupied a structurally somewhat similar position (cf. Evans-Pri- 493 494

§43 chard, (1947). The presence of the Jat Regards as political head-
§44 ornamentally affects the internal organization of the various Jat tribes, and the segmentary nature of the lineage organization is therefore not expressed fully. Each Rais becomes de-facto vested with some authority as the representative of the permanently established Jat Regards, and the political structure is thus actually a compromise between a truly segmentary lineage organization and a hierarchical organization.

§45 As far as its formal structure goes, the Jat confederacy seems extremely similar to the political system of the early Mongols, as described e. g. by Haudos. The prominence of Chengiz Khan's lineage is phrased by him in terms of the resemblance of other descent groups, to emphasize that all the subjects of the Khan were considered as the vassals not of the ruler but of his family and his close kinsmen as represented by him (op. cit., p. 91). Essentially the same might well be said of the relation between the tribe of the Jat confederacy and their Regards lineage. It is interesting to speculate whether, since the political mechanism seems to be present, it was merely the difficulties of topography that prevented the Jat and similar Kurdish confederacies from forming the large units that one finds in the Central Asian steppe area.

§46 The immediate modification in Jat formal structure made necessary by the adoption of sedentary life and agriculture are slight, though the meanings and importance attaching to the various aspects of the organization change radically. Generally, each *khel* splits in a part of the old tie pattern, and the internal limit of the *khel* becomes the formally elected *Sikka* (mayor or headman) of the resulting village. Any one tie then tends to split up completely, some *khels* settling in the winter camp sites around Qasi Kalan, others 60 km. N.E. on the extreme mountain of Shahr-i-sur. Whereas tribal unity thus loses its significance, each village is registered as the property of one or another of the Regards, and *[of]* administration, as well as the management of Regards leadership, a general

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF THE HAWAWAND.

According to their own traditions, the Hawawands entered Southern Kurdistan from Persia as nomadic herdsmen. Seeing the opportunities offered by the ineffectual nature of Ottoman governmental control, they entered on a career of brigandage, leaving the territory that passed between Persia and Iraq. The enemy relations between the Persian and Ottoman empires made this all the more feasible, since any activity detrimental to one power had the covert support of the other. Though the Hawawands have settled in villages, they did not immediately take up agriculture, except for small garden patches of melons etc. As they proudly assert: after more than a generation we reaped our daily bread with our gunbarrels. All accounts by early travellers describe how this small group terrorized the district by striking quickly and effectively in widely separated areas. Only after the First World War did their economy become truly based on farming. Through this turbulent history, tribal political organization remained in importance, and some features of the system may be seen very clearly.

The Hawawand group as a whole is regarded as one tire of the same magnitude as the various components fail thus. Even in its greatest period of glory, the Hawawand tire could muster no more than 200-300 horsemen, implying a total population of 1,000-1,500 individuals. The process of branching has however been retained, in fact, as compared to the Jaf, the Hawawand political structure seems to be based on a clearer political recognition of the segmentation into lineage sections which follows from the marriage pattern. The hierarchy of progressively more inclusive lineage segments, from the single village level (population 50—100) and up to the maximal lineage group, is given political significance.

There is no single leader of the whole Hawawand tire[1]; questions concerning the group as a whole are discussed and decided in a council made up of the Aghas (=headmen) of the 4 primary branches. Each of these branches are again divided into sub-branches,

[1] Ismail, Mohammad Amin Agha of the Rayash clans paramount section

[p2] and so on ending on the village level. The leader of any category of group is called *Agba*, any branch or named section thereof will in certain contexts be called a *tiva*.

The genealogy of these branches is traced, but varies somewhat from village to village. Such variations derive partly from the lack of interest in collateral units, partly from an attempt to stress certain relationships or to construct a more flattering genealogy.

[p3] [p4] [p5] [p6] [p7] Descent is traced in male line from the common ancestor Hamma, the founder of the tiv, nine generations removed from the present

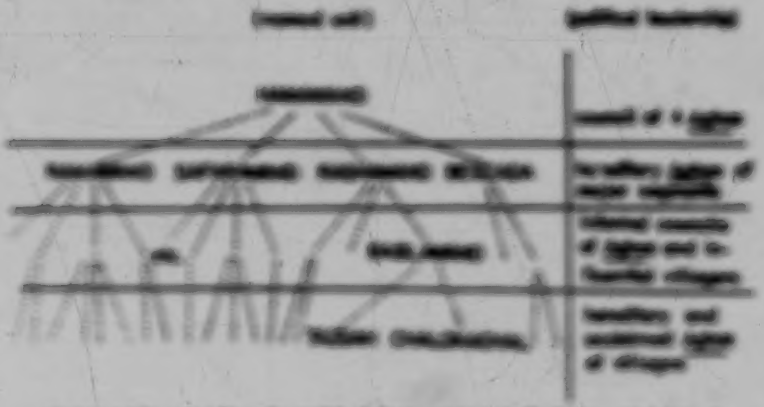

Diagram No. 1 A Tsaguh model of their position in the Makurdi Area organization

adult group. The origins of Hamma, having no political significance to the group, are of little interest to the villagers, though Arabic origin is occasionally claimed for its prestige value.

One version was collected in the village of Kwei Sark: Hamma had 4 sons, Sellen, Yadjer, Kudidi, and Ramovom; from these are descended the 4 major branches of the group. The villagers themselves claim to be Yadjer. They could indicate the area where the descendants of the three other sons live, but were unable or unconcerned in tracing relations in any greater detail.

In the village of Tsaguh, a somewhat different version was given. The major branches were named as Ramovwud, Sehavwud, Kudu-

ward, and Begunde. As will be noticed, the branch of Yadjer, to [illegible] which the Kuni lords belong, is not in this list. The Kuni lords [illegible] in fact belong to the Begunde branch, as either Yadjer is the ancestor [illegible] of all the Begunde, or a smaller agnatic category has been elevated to the level of a major branch, for the greater glory of the Kuni lord group. The villagers in Tangsh seem to belong to the Bakkawand division, again made up of the villagers from Tangsh and Chakkachal, the latter now having been abandoned and the villagers scattered. The Bakkawand were derived from the Rashawand, in unspecified fashion. A Tangsh model of their position in the two would then read as shown in Diagram No. 4.

The *Agbe* of a village is appointed or granted power by the male [illegible] inhabitants of that village. In practice, the position is hereditary, but not according to any rule of seniority, and village gossipmen undoubtedly influence the powers of succession. The village *Agbe* has only the authority which follows from his own power and prestige, and the goodwill of his followers.

The position as *Agbe* of one of the four major branches is either similarly hereditary, or, if there is no suitable son of the old *Agbe*, a new *Agbe* is elected by the villagers. These *Agbe* will generally have the position and means to support a group of retainers, paralleling the *Pyabirnada* of the *Jul Begi*. They also have a vaguely institutionalized mechanism to enforce their authority. Thus, though the formal position of the *Agbe* of the four major Bakkawand segments is similar that of the *Jul Begunde*, the actual differences more reflect the difference in scale than in formal position.

Because the *Jul* use the Bakkawand lineage organization function [illegible] as the ideals powers closely exemplified by the Cyrenaic Bedouin, discussed above. A position of authority and super-ordination does in fact become vested in the individual *Agbe* and *Bata*, who tends to apply coercive means to support such a hierarchy of authority. Though the ideal structure of the political structure is that of a segmentary lineage organization, the system does in fact function as a somewhat different person, as will be shown more fully later.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF TENANT VILLAGES

6.50 The political organization of the non-tribal area is generally much simpler, unifying a much smaller group. Immediately above the village level, external administration takes over control. In the village unit, a kkle or muktar (mayor, headman) is elected to serve as an intermediary between the people of the village and the authorities. Frequently he is appointed from above rather than freely elected, in an attempt to achieve a balance of power within the village. In the official governmental system, the kkle of the village is the official of the smallest unit. A hierarchy of officers, appointed from above in the bureaucratic system, administers progressively more inclusive units, culminating on the bureaucratic level, the Wainawa(?) of the Lowe (governor of the province), directly responsible to the government ministries, and with considerable autonomy in practice, however, the headwoman of the village intervenes at the base of this hierarchy, and the kkle serves as an intermediary between the villagers and the headwoman, and has few dealings directly with official administration.

6.51 When left to their own devices, the villagers generally elect to
6.52 office the elder male leader of the largest kinship group. As a consequence of the marriage pattern, such kinship groups tend to operate all as endogamous blocks. But due to the lower frequency of Fulbe marriage among the non-tribal villagers (see p. 40), these blocks show less organization and unity than the endogamous subdivisions in the tribal system, and could not properly be called lineages. Furthermore, they tend to be bilateral, in the sense that relationships traced through female links retain some importance. The relative size of these bilateral kinship blocks change fairly slowly, as village headmanship, as well as leadership in the kinship groups, tends to follow an apparently hereditary pattern from father to son.

6.53 The powers of the kkle derive in part from his powers as the head of such a group, in part from his close relations with the headwoman, and the implicit threat of reporting illegalities (or in fact making false accusations) to him, as the leader of the village.

be the exercise certain rights in his relations with the landowner — 423
he can e. g. exclude any newcomer from village membership.

Among the various villages in an area, or those belonging to one 441
landowner, there is no attempt at coordination. My host over-
seeing others, the three neighbouring villages Upper Ward, Dwon-
and Dirbare in the Sabinsani valley. These villages share, for histor-
cal reasons, the cultivate rights to the surrounding area. Rather than
making any attempt at concerted action in matters concerning them
all, e. g. by meetings of the village headmen, there exists considerable
enmity between the three villages. A marriage between the son of 731
the Akkin of Dwon and the daughter of the leading family of Upper
Ward does not seem to have had any political results, and was
probably manipulated to enhance the prestige of the Akkin and his
son in their own village.

GENERAL FEATURES OF POLITICAL SYSTEMS 937

The application of these formal political organizations, both of
the lineage and feudal types, is modified by one basic principle,
namely, the universal application of some difference, and the result-
ing lack of conceptualization of the villein, as apart from the
land parcel occupying it or any one occupier. An example might
illustrate the point. Upon my arrival in the village of Dwon, a small
group of workmen were engaged in laying a brick floor in the land
house of my host, the landowner. In their social classification of me,
the only criterion available to them was the fact of my being his
guest, so I enjoyed a reflection of his high status position, and conse-
quently found myself in a relation of superordination with respect
to the workmen. They found it necessary to encourage their work
zealand to perform personal services for me, e. g. serving me my
tea, etc. The workmen, brought to the village for the sole purpose of
laying the brick floor, had no feeling that there was only a part-role
in the situation, where they were expected to perform a specific
service and no more. The status of bricklayer is clearly inferior to
that of friend-of-the-landowner; the fact that their current job by
virtue of their villein as bricklayers did not release them from cer-
tain subordination to the occupier of higher status. Whereas a

570 clear-cut difference is recognized, such as all-inclusive relations of super- and sub-ordination seem to result, and demands even of personal service by the persons of higher status are thought reasonable.

572 In the formal organization, groups are clearly defined, as criteria 573 of descent and residence, and each group is furnished with a named leader. But the source of the leader's office remains rather vague; he is, in Max Weber's terms (Parsons 1947, p. 131), granted a liberal sphere of arbitrary free grace. For a large part, the political leaders are not followed by virtue of their holding an office, but are granted the right to make political, as well as other, demands on their followers by virtue of their higher status position — which waxes and wanes with the vicissitudes of fortune. Though the formal political categories are named and hierarchically ordered, the actual distribution and foci of power and control in the village and lineage remain quite fluid.

It is profitable in our analysis to make a distinction between authority, the more or less illegitimate powers attached to a specific office or part-status, and the blanket term *power*, which depends upon the *total* status position of a particular individual, and his personal charisma (Weber, 1947), and is taken to cover the individual's total ability to lead or otherwise control the actions of other people.

This distinction is generally not made by the Kurdish villager, since, indeed, the abstract concept of an office is hardly developed; but it is useful in an analysis to distinguish the legitimate powers that belong with the office or part-status. The lack of a conceptual distinction in Kurdish thinking between authority in this sense and total power is evident in the almost complete absence of lateral relations between a specialized unit of functionals, in favor of a complete dominance of line relations of super- and sub-ordination.

Returning to the applicability of the term authority in such a system: The total status position of the individual, from which his power stems, is a product of all his part-statuses, not only in the political field, but also in other hierarchies (e. g. hierarchies of religious power, wealth and clan status, etc., cf. p. 78 ff.). Any for-

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 WAll Kurd WAll

and, named political positions, however, is connected with an approximate total status position as a sort of stereotype. The relative grading of formal political positions is vaguely defined, and the individuals of a village, through competing for the positions, will align in superior and subordination according to this grading. Thus certain ill defined demands and powers are *expected* (and therefore more readily submitted to) from persons occupying such positions. This amount of expected and generally unquestioned power is the authority that belongs with the particular position. The authority is thus not derived from the part-status, as it would if it were an office; it is brought to it. Persons occupying the position may at times not be able to exert it; nonetheless, in the formal political organization, this authority and degree of ability to apply sanctions of some kind is assumed.

These considerations are applicable in both the tribal and the non-tribal political systems, and modify the expansion that these systems take. The evident differences between Kurdish tribal and non-tribal structure are thus reduced, and the Kurdish segmentary lineage organization becomes in its actual application more similar to the Kurdish non-tribal organization than to the classical segmentary organizations, exemplified above by the Cyrenaica Bedouin. When combined with this principle of universal application of status differences, the segmentary structure of the lineage offers the framework for a hierarchical organization of leaders of segments. And these segments are residential and territorial units, as are the units in the non-tribal system. In the following, then, Kurdish lineage organization will be seen as a hierarchy of leaders of groups of increasing genealogical spread, rather than in the classical manner as whole segments in opposition.

The general characteristics of Kurdish political systems correspond in many ways to those of the *traditional* system of Max Weber (*op. cit.*). The rules governing the various positions in the hierarchy are not enacted, they are traditionally defined. «The order underlying a system of traditional authority always defines a system of statuses of persons who can legitimately exercise authority». The concept of the *office* is undeveloped: «Such a status is different from an office». It does not involve specifically defined powers with

642 559 the presumption that everything not legitimized in terms of the order is outside its scope». «So long as the encumbent of such a status does not act counter to the traditional order, ... loyalty is due, not to 'the order', but to him personally.» (Parsons, op. cit., p. 121).

The main contrast between the Kurdish systems and this «traditional» type lies in the implication in the definition of the latter that concrete traditional prescriptions are indeed accepted and agreed upon by all. The cultural heterogeneity of the South Kurdish area has been emphasized above; this heterogeneity makes for a situation where a truly traditional system can not operate. Any single concrete traditional prescription tends to be questioned by all but a minority, and conflicting interpretations of what is in fact the traditional order are constantly advanced. As a result, the theme of *power* attains an overriding importance, following the line of reasoning that if you can get away with something, it can't be *very* wrong. The effective check on excesses in the use of power is the threat of murder. Though there is obviously much more excited talk than 481 action, Kurds are rightly famous for being «trigger-happy», and a person who strongly feels that his rights have been infringed upon may go to great lengths to retaliate. Since no institutional means exist, violence has become institutionalized as the only mechanism at hand.

178 642 It is tempting to see the present situation as the result of breakdown of a formerly functioning traditional system. There is considerable evidence indicating that Southern Kurdistan some 100 years ago was better integrated than today, in the form of a strongly 179 692 feudal Pashalik centering around Suleimani. The Baban Pashas of Suleimani had frequent opportunities during conflicts with both the Persian and the Ottoman rulers to show that they had the unquestioning support of an overriding majority of the population, and through several centuries of rule they built up a traditional hierarchy of hereditary status positions, entitling persons to political offices (Rich op. cit., p. 113). The traditional nature of the rule is strikingly brought out in the following citation, where the Pasha of Suleimani explains the solidarity that his subjects feel towards him by contrast-

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 NA11 Kurd NA11

ing his form of rule to that of the feudal usurper in Sinan, Persia: «You are not the lord of a tribe, nor are your men your tribesmen. You may clothe them, feed them, and make them rich, but they are not your cousins, they are but your servants» (ibid, p. 86).

When Baban rule was broken in 1851, Ottoman legal practice as well as personnel achieved a footing in the area. This contributed further to the breakdown of traditional principles, since it offered individuals the opportunity to manipulate the two different systems, traditional usage and Ottoman legal code, to their own advantage. This most profoundly affected land tenure. All land, unless otherwise registered, was decreed to belong to the Ottoman Sultan. Though the rule existed that no whole village should be registered as the property of any single person, this and other rules were generally overlooked. Thus leaders of *tirat*, *Begs*, or in fact any other person who could bribe a few witnesses, registered large tracts of land as their personal property. Although actual power was of course necessary to make these formal transactions effective as far as the collecting of tax was concerned, the result was that a category of landowner emerged for which there were no clear traditional precedents, and their claims, when supported by power and supposed Ottoman land code, could not truly be disputed. As a result, the field was left open to individual exploitation on a much larger scale than in Baban times, and the only effective checks were the above mentioned threats to the personal safety of the exploiter.

COMPOSITE COMMUNITIES

In the Hamawand area, some local groups are found today where tribally organized Hamawand exploit a non-tribal tenant population *(Mezkjin)* as a serf group. Such situations have come about by recent military conquest, and show incipient developments of a caste system. Certain aspects of organization have been developed by the Hamawand as an adjustment to this situation.

The Hamawand formal political structure already outlined was also a military hierarchy of command. Each village was expected to muster a group of horsemen, usually 10—15, led by the village *Agha*, as a fighting unit in the Hamawand army. Each of these soldiers,

721 usually called «riflemen», owned at least one horse and one rifle, and kept a constant large supply of ammunition. During their periods of insurgence, it was difficult for the Hamawands to obtain such supplies. An informal symbiosis was therefore established with merchants in Sulaimani and Kirkuk, who, in return for furnishing the items that the Hamawands needed, were permitted to pass through the area with their other goods. The Hamawands used Egyptian Mauser rifles, and made their bullets of soft lead. As late as 1961, swords and lances were still employed.

722 When a Hamawand boy reached the age of 7, military instruction began — «just like soldiers are trained». The father supervised the training, and according to legend, any boy who did not show sufficient fearlessness was chased out of the area. After the youth had killed his first man in battle, or otherwise showed himself worthy, he was given the full status of rifleman, and generally a present from the *Aghe* — a horse, a good rifle, or a quantity of stolen animals for sale.

723 The village *Aghas* were expected to mobilize the riflemen of the village at short notice for service in the larger unit, led by the *Aghas* of the major branches of the Hamawand. But the village *Agha* was also free to initiate raids or conquest himself. A small group of *Aghas* from closely related villages might get together and contribute forces to the venture, or a single village might undertake the enterprise. Then a warparty was formed, under the leadership of one *Agha* or one senior *Agha*. If the purpose were not looting of caravans, but conquest, some as-yet unconquered village was chosen as the object of attack, and the normal procedure would be for the group of riflemen to ride in a body to the village and offer the
727 inhabitants an ultimatum. If the village surrendered, one of the Hamawand party was settled in it to collect taxes. If the village chose to resist, it would be attacked, and if the Hamawand gained entry they would rob the village of all movable property, as well as domestic animals, and carry it all away. The defeated villagers, unable to continue their agricultural work without implements and animals, would then normally send a delegation to the victorious Hamawand village, promising submission for return of the property.

7: Barth G-S (1961) 320.5 B28.1 Burg 98.11

427 A Hamawand *Agba*, normally a close relative of the leader of the
422 warparty, would be appointed to the conquered village. He would
reside permanently in the village with a small group of Hamawand
supporters. When remained of the local town after their immediate
needs were satisfied would be passed on to the *Agba* leader of the
original party.

448 Conflicts easily arose between the Hamawand usurper and his
original leader. As soon as the balance of power changed in favor
of the former, and he further felt that he would be able to control
the conquered village with his own forces, he would declare himself
independent and thereby found a new lineage branch.

It may seem surprising that the smaller group in such a village
should be successful in forcibly dominating the larger group for any
length of time. As far as the conquest itself is concerned, the point
was clearly made to me by the leader of one group of subjected vil-
lages these days, people were so busy with their farms and things,
they had no time to be ready with guns and horses. Those who had
enough money to feed the men that rode around on horses could
conquer such poor villagers. And later, although the local Hama-
wands may have declared themselves independent of their old village,
they could still count on support from their fellow tribesmen in case
of revolt. The peasants, on the other hand, had no organization inte-
grating a larger group. Furthermore, it is the peasant group who has
the vested interest in peace, so that the crop can ripen and the cows
survive. In case of conflict, the Hamawands risked only the loss of
an asset, whereas the peasants, no matter what the outcome might
be, were practically assured the loss of their whole year's crop.

431 The local group that emerged from these conquests has a very
433 characteristic structure and organization. Except where external
administration intervenes effectively, all political power is in the
hands of a well organized Hamawand minority, led by an hereditary
Agba. This ruling group has vested interests in remaining separate
from the remainder of the village, and the close tribal organization
limited by descent provides the necessary mechanism.

432 This political dominance serves primarily to enforce certain privi-
435 leges in the economic field. The Hamawands regard themselves as

the owners of the land, and collect as rent the traditionally stipulated fraction of the peasants' crop: 1/5—1/10 of the cereal crop, 1/3 of the irrigated crop, where such is grown. Usually the Hanawand section of the village is too large to live entirely on these rents, and since raiding activities are no longer possible (at least not on any scale, though they are still accused especially of cattle-theft by their neighbours), they find it necessary to contribute to subsistence by farming. The Hanawand farmers hold land as private, inheritable property. They recognize the rights of some of non-tribal peasants to inherit the cultivation rights to specific fields from their fathers, and where the situation permits, such rights may easily be infringed upon.

A third group in the usually present in the village, consisting of labourers, generally of *shenigo* origin. This group is in a similar economic position to that of labourers in the ordinary sedentary village, with the exception that upward mobility is virtually impossible. Neither of the two conflicting groups, the Hanawand or the sub-jected Mesdjin, are willing to weaken their position by transferring the rights on land to any outside group, and the labourer can therefore never possess the necessary land to rise to secure farmer status, even when given the economic means.

The economic conflict between the Hanawand and the Mesdjin is more bitter now than before external administration pacified the area. Formerly, the relation was more nearly one of symbiosis. The peasants, by being attached to a militarily powerful tribe, were in fact protected from the raids of other war-parties in return for the tax they paid. Furthermore, they benefited from the raids of their Hanawand lords by serving as intermediaries in realizing the value of the loot. The Hanawands themselves could not enter the Bazaars of the towns, for fear of being recognized. The peasants, on the other hand, were free to enter the markets and sell the goods — for a consideration. If their war-lords were at all successful, the income from such transactions might well more than balance the rental tax paid on the farmland.

As a result of the persistent tensions between the two groups, and the clear difference in status position, very little, if any, inter-

marriage takes place. The marriage arrangements with respect to the close kinship group — *how* in any case — will among the Hanarwandi be with Hanarwandi of other villages. Thus a caste separation

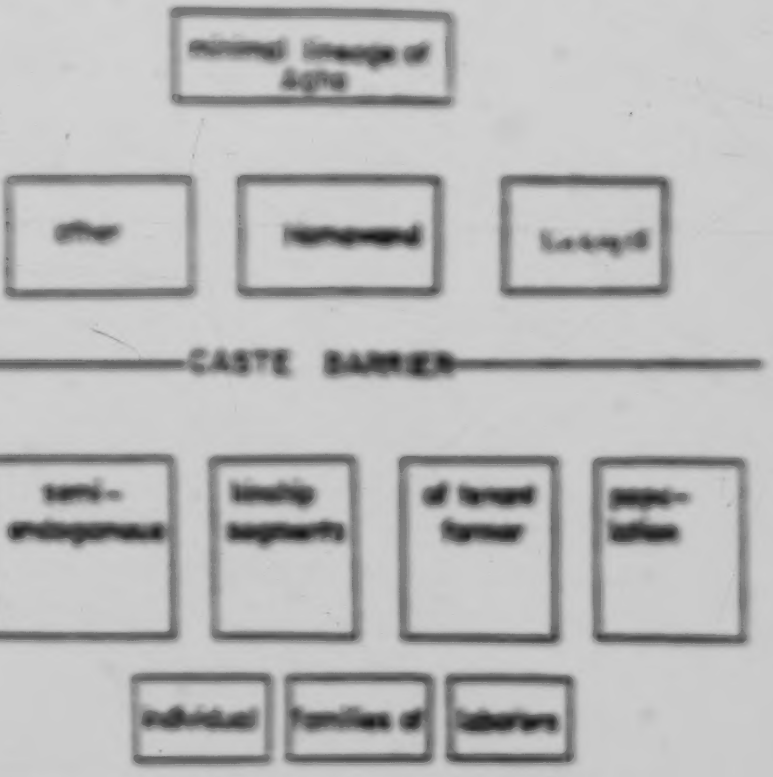

Diagram No. 1. Composition of composite village

631

tends to grow up, separating the Hanarwandi effectively from the Mankjis group, and the composition of the local group might be schematically represented as in diagram No. 1.

One of the composite Hanarwandi-Mankjis villages was studied briefly. However, due to increased tensions connected with the opp-

Under a certain sum of money a year, all young male citizens of the two villages are liable to two years of military training and service. This is much resented by most villagers, and they manage to avoid being called up. According to the Hinduja, the Hamawands have an arrangement with the police whereby they give the names of all Hindjia men in the two villages who are liable for such service, in return for being left in peace themselves. Thus, it is said, the fighting strength of the Hindjia is constantly kept down.

The Hindjia, on the other hand, are accused of manipulating the religious brotherhood of Darwishes for political purposes, so as to organize all the Hindjia of the neighbouring villages in a movement of resistance. To counteract this influence, the Hamawand Agha is at pains to oppose the darwishes at troublous, and attempts to enhance the position of the local mullah, the recognized leader of the local mosque. — The final verdict, however, rests with the Land Settlement Commission, an institution the integrity of which few persons choose to question.

The rigidity of the Kurdish tribal system is here clearly discerned, and might profitably be contrasted to that of the Nuer, as described by Evans-Pritchard (1940). The Nuer have, in spite of extensive conquests and various vicissitudes, retained a system of patrilineal conquering lineages as the basis of their political organization. These lineages however are not corporate localized groups, but are exceptionally identified with certain areas, where they tend to form the dominating core of the local villages. Through a system of adoption of conquered Dinka tribesmen to specific lineages, and by widening descent through females, a larger community is built around the core, based on sociologically kinship. Among the Kurds, on the other hand, the general practice of FaDiDa marriage and other close family endogamy makes any tribal superstructure impossible between conqueror and conquered, and encourages caste separation. Furthermore, kinship through female links is given no political recognition. The principle of sociologicale kinship is unfamiliar and would be in conflict with Islamic doctrine — the kinship terminology describes actual, genealogical distances, and practices of adoption into lineages would be unacceptable. The only way two groups could fuse in the

[illegible] could be by demonstrating (or inventing) genealogical connection. This can hardly be done on any grand scale where common residence is virtually impossible, except on based on a relationship of conquerer and conquered.

As a result, the Kurdish tribal village retains a high degree of lineage unity, evidenced strictly patrilineally, as compared to Nuer villages. The Kurd who leaves his tribal territory, or even village, can obtain no political power in his new environment, therefore has minimal prestige, and thus tends to remain with his lineage group. But because of this, the Kurdish lineage system has not the adaptability of the Nuer system, and breaks down in a situation of conquest or external administration.

(4) ORGANIZATION OF THE BABAN POLITICAL STRUCTURE

In the light of these extensive examples from Hamawand territory today, some of the characteristics of the old Baban rule become much clearer. The Baban themselves were not a tribe, but a complex lineage of the same type as the *Jaf Begzade*, ultimately derived from the *Soldier tribe* of the Pashdir area. Their power, however was based on the tribally organized groups, and a majority of the villages seem to have been controlled in the fashion of the above Hamawand villages, with a basic split between a ruling, tribally organized soldier caste and a non-tribal peasant population. This separation was clearly recognized by Rich in 1820, and in his list of the populations of the Pashalik, only the Pashdir area is described as wholly tribal, the other districts are mixed. Some inhabitants are of the peasant, some of the *shegirdi* race (= tribally organized), i. e., no village has inhabitants of one exclusive kind.» (Rich op. cit., p. 200). The tribally organized minority was employed by the Pasha to control the larger population: « . . . it would never do for him (Omer Agha, one of the feudal lords under the Pasha) to keep the citizen or peasant caste in his service. They never grow much attached, nor will they stand by you in any difficulties. The clansmen (= tribal Kurd), on the contrary, though not of your own clan (= tive), grow warmly attached to you, and then neither hunger, thirst,

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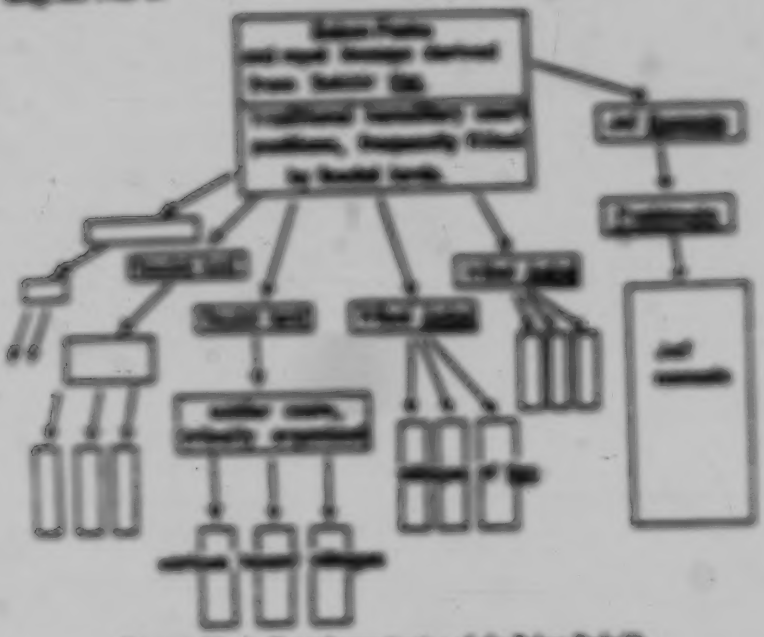

(Diagram No. 4. Formal organization of the Bahon Pokoklik)

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THE CHARISMA OF THE LEADER

and can not be understood as divorced from the total process of the leader.

The interplay of structural and personal factors in defining the position and power of the leader, and thus the specific form of the political organization, may best be illustrated by the history of Shaikh Mahmud[1], a leader of considerable importance. His emergence as Wali or King of Kurdistan after the First World War, frequently misrepresented or given a biased account in English sources, is the most outstanding feature of political development in Southern Kurdistan in the present century. He constitutes the charismatic leader scheduled by Max Weber (op. cit.) and others to appear upon the breakdown of an established order. The variety of the sources of political power, as well as the importance of the person and the vagueness in the definition of the office in the Kurdish system, are here clearly exemplified.

The family of Shaikh Mahmud traces its origin from two learned brothers, theologians, who arrived in Kurdistan from Persia some 170 years ago. Due to descent from Muhammad and a tradition of ascetics, the family retained a spiritually leading position. The immediate founder of the present lineage is Koka Hamma, revered as a saint in Sulaimani. During the ascension of Baban rule, the Shaikhs remained divorced from politics; their wealth grew slowly from occasional gifts of land and villages, especially from the Baban themselves.

With the political instability and disorganization following the end of Baban rule, Shaikh Said, the father of Shaikh Mahmud, entered actively into the conflicts, and asserted his secular powers in the area through a successful combination of violence and diplomacy. Competing factions attempted to have him deposed by arranging for him to be called to Istanbul by Sultan Abdul Hamid. The Sultan, being extremely wary of court intrigue, frequently preferred to seek his support among outsiders, and the ruming was a great success from Shaikh Said's point of view, effectually reinforcing his position. Shaikh Said was murdered in Mosul in 1909, and succeeded by his son Shaikh Mahmud.

[1] It should be noted that the term Shaikh in Kurdish is not a political title, but mainly indicates descent from the Prophet.

Upon his succession to leadership in the Shaikh family, Shaikh Mahmud continued his father's policy with great force. Southern Kurdistan was at the time in a state of anarchy, large areas had been depopulated, the old trade and pilgrim routes were largely closed to brigands, especially by the Hamawands, who successfully challenged Ottoman supremacy in the face of large punitive expeditions.

Obviously in such a situation, conflicting stories are told about the part played by each faction in the struggle, and the various versions of Shaikh Mahmud's career form no exception. Any evaluation of the practical and moral virtues of his activities is outside the present scope, and must be based on much fuller evidence than is available at present. What is of interest in this context is merely the foundations of his power and the form of his control in the area.

Economic basis. From the modest beginnings in Bakan times, the family's economic power was progressively enhanced. The possibilities inherent in the Ottoman practices of land registration seem to have been utilized. After close relations had been established with the Sultan, the Shaikhs were able to gain control over numerous villages by buying the land at very low rates from the government. A major source of revenue that made this type of transaction possible was the ownership of the Bazaar (market district) of Sulaimani (even today, 1/4 of the Bazaar belongs to the Shaikh family vs. 1/4 municipally owned). In addition to its economic importance, this also enabled the family in effect to control the city of Sulaimani. The Shaikh family thus became one of the three major landowning groups in the area. It should however be pointed out that in spite of nearly continuous expansion of property, the whole Shaikh family today owns less land than *one* member of the *Jaf Brigade* alone (Hassan Beg of Halabja). Thus Shaikh Mahmud's political supremacy *did not derive directly from ownership*; landed property merely offered the necessary economic foundation for his political activity.

Semi-sacred position. As descendants of the Prophet, the Shaikh family is considered to be vested with certain supernatural powers, derived ancestrally from the sainted ancestor Baba Hassan. This gives Shaikh Mahmud the specific power to make amulets that

[illegible] powers the bearer from bullets and knives. The amulet consists of a number of Koranic sentences, is [illegible] up in a triangle of cloth of specified color, and carried pinned to the shoulder, to the hair, or suspended by a string around the neck or under one arm. It occasionally the bearer of such an amulet is killed by knife or bullet, this can easily be explained, since the protective power is not operative while the person is thinking bad thoughts or if he loses his temper or hatred. Stories proving the efficacy of the amulets are rife: a fez been hung around the neck of a runner, and no matter how hard they tried, competent marksmen were unable to shoot the bird.

Charisma. The personal charisma attached to Shaikh Mahmud is rather difficult to separate from his semi-sacred powers, and to perhaps directly from them. He is endowed with the ability to read a person's thoughts and character; he knows before a word is spoken for what purpose a person has come to him. A certain delight in other people's weaknesses and a taste for witty and practical jokes further contributes to his ex-ordinary, semi-sacred reputation. Last but not least, he also wields a Weberian realm by his extraordinary personality and force of character.

The failure of his charismatic mission to succeed must be ascribed primarily to external rather than local factors. Towards the end of the First World War, contact was established between Shaikh Mahmud and the Indian Army in Mesopotamia, and, after being given [illegible] promises of Kurdish independence, Shaikh Mahmud chose to shift his loyalties from the Turks to the British. He proclaimed himself King, rose in a revolt re-establishing the form of the Baban dynasty, and perhaps hoping to emerge as the leader of all of Kurdistan. By the treaty of Lausanne, Allied plans were reversed, and protracted conflict over the question of Kurdish independence continued in the area till 1932. Some of these conflicts derived from international developments, others were rather accidentary. It is indeed surprising that the British administration should chose E. B. Soane as their agent in the area, and the person to cooperate with Shaikh Mahmud — Soane who, due to personal experiences with [illegible] before the war makes the most highly emotional attacks on Shaikh

widened in his book (Owens, op. cit.), published well before his appointment. Such personal antipathy between the two leading figures could only make the struggle more bitter and a compromise more difficult to reach.

The formal organization accomplished by Shaikh Mahmud for his large domain never had time to take shape, and by now it is almost as have been in accordance with many Western principles. The rudimentary powers of the early 1920s was along traditional feudal lines — he is said to have travelled around with a large army, living off the lands as he passed through the various districts to demonstrate. A suggestion of some of the powers and institutions may be observed today.

At present, Shaikh Mahmud lives in the small village Dar-Shaikh south and west of Sulaimani[1]. He is surrounded by a group of viziers paralleling the *Jal Beg/ Pyshmale* system and function, but organized along more irregular lines. A typical escape for a young man who has become irretrievably involved in feud or law gives young women to leave his village is to join a feudal lord of Shaikh Mahmud's type, buying security by being the follower of an important leader, and in return serving as the leader's private police force. The Shaikh thus has a group of men who depend on him for protection and livelihood, and may use them to enforce his control over the villages he owns. His opponents like to make veiled accusations that the group also is used to threaten minor leaders of others area. However untrue, such stories do not serve to reduce the value of his friendship or the weight of his wrath.

Friendly relations with leaders and groups outside the Shaikh's immediate control are maintained through contacts on the major festival days of the Islamic year, when Dar-Shaikh is a bustling beehive full of embroidered robes and flying turbans, and the Shaikh himself is constantly active in those separate reception rooms. Furthermore,

[1] It should be noted that Shaikh Mahmud denies taking any part in government, and the following is on his own admission his statement. The activities described were simply to perpetuate his prestige, and are of course in the present connection only by virtue of the parallelism in the mechanisms used in securing revenge and in maintaining a power position.

2 — Folklore Archive

obligations on community enough by liberal gifts (»He made from the poor and gives to the rich» in the words of one critic).

Such institutionalized or regularized means of exercise and establishing relations of dependence are very parallel to those used by the leaders in the traditional tribal political organization, and illustrate how the charismatic leader manages to utilize traditional symbols and institutions. It is also striking how the importance of the charismatic leader extends to the limits of the previous, disorganized unit — here the Rahan Dahalik — and no further. It is very doubtful that Shaikh Mahmud ever had any appreciable following outside the districts of Southern Ererkiran.

Personal charisma being important even in the traditional system, it plays a tremendous role in a situation of disorganization, and may survive a series of defeats. Characteristic is the comment by common Ererkiran, when reason is lost once sanctioned to the Shaikh's defeat: »We will respect the Shaikh, and if he comes to right, we will serve him again.»

Chapter III.

A. Kinship composition and organization of local groups.
B. The ideal field.

KINSHIP COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION OF LOCAL GROUPS

The important dichotomy between tribal and non-tribal villages has been touched upon previously, and the actual differences in the formal political organization have been outlined. The following table (No. 1) attempts to illustrate co-variation between the type of formal political organization and the frequency of certain marriage patterns, resulting in a contrast in the kinship composition of local groups. In the limited period of fieldwork, and due to local difficulties in connection with land tenure and military training, it was not feasible to collect synoptic census materials, and the table should serve as an illustration of a point, the validity of which was checked more extensively by less exact means, and does not pretend in itself to be statistically conclusive.

A further comment should be made to justify the separation of tribal vs. non-tribal frequencies in the exhibit village of Kami Sark. The non-tribal category is made up of recent immigrant families, largely born or even married in other villages, and does not truly belong in the table as representative of Kami Sark.

The generalization that seems to hold for all the villages which were investigated would be: A contrast exists between the frequency

of cousin marriage in tribal as compared to non-tribal villages, high frequencies of cousin marriage being associated with a tribal political system, that is, with the lineage type organization. General village endogamy, on the other hand, remains high in the non-tribal villages, marriages exogamous with respect to the village having similar low frequencies in both groups.

Table III.
Showing of the correlation between political organization and frequency of marriage with relatives

Name of village	Non-tribal					Tribal	
	cousin	brothers'	sisters	other relatives	non-relatives		
Kuda Thikri, Zamboor	0	0	0	0	10	10	10
	village endogamy: 100 % family endogamy: 0 % cousin marriage: 0 %						
Thikri,							
Tungah (Hanimaadhoo)	5	1	—	2	2	5	15
Kuru Isdu	6	—	2	1	1	5	
	village endogamy: 80 % family endogamy: 70 % cousin marriage: 17 %						
Kuru Isdu (non-tribal)	—	—	1	—	—	0	1

As a result of these contrasting frequencies of marriage types, the kinship composition of the two types of villages show important differences. The tribal village constitutes one close-knit kinship group, or is made up of distinct endogamous lineage segments of a larger lineage group. The non-tribal village, on the other hand, presents a less organized picture in terms of biological relationships though predominantly endogamous, it is internally essentially unstructured above the household level. The non-tribal village might

may be considered an example of Murdock's clan type of community, that is, an endogamous, but unstructured localized kin group (Murdock 1949, p. 67).

Some of the interrelations between marriage patterns, kinship composition of local groups, and type of political organization are fairly clear. In the tribal political system, patrilineal descent is of considerable importance. Membership in the political unit itself depends on patrilineal descent and one gains prestige from belonging to particular segments of the larger lineage. As compared to the non-tribal village, the whole status system is considerably more elaborated, as one would expect in a traditional system. Since marriage, both according to Islamic law and general Kurdish values should be between equals, and since each lineage segment wishes to preserve its own status position (and may in fact need to over-rate it), neither one is willing to marry down in the social scale, and near-kin marriage is the reasonable solution. Most close is the status equivalence of children of brothers, and FaBrDa becomes the preferred spouse.

This emphasis on equivalence is however only one factor conducive to a pattern of FaBrDa marriage. Perhaps more important is its political significance, briefly indicated previously.

A comparison of the tribal and non-tribal patterns may clarify this point. In the tribal system, power relations on the village level are more amenable to manipulation than in the non-tribal system, where most power is vested in the absentee landowner. At the same time, these power relations in the tribal village are defined in lineage and kinship terms. A man can only expect political support from his immediate agnatic relatives — those who by descent belong to his political sub-section — primarily brothers, sons, and brothers' sons, the relations to the latter being most critical. Political obligations can be reinforced in this group by giving them a daughter in marriage; conversely, the group would be alienated by being refused that daughter. The man who marries his daughter out of the lineage segment and takes a high bride-price for her thereby converts her into an economic asset, but also isolates himself from his agnatic relatives, his potential political supporters. He can then expect no support in a situation where actual power is important, such as in

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factional disputes at first, and his social economic advantage gained from the daughter's marriage is thus dissipated. Polygyny thus reinforces the political implications of the lineage system. These relations might be summarized as follows:

TRIBAL:

power relations relatively = political units defined = political emphasis on
unimportant by agnatic kinship marriage — high fre-
quency of polygynous marriage

In the non-tribal village, on the other hand, the power relations are given to greater means, in the ways that they are outside the control of most villagers. Furthermore, they are based on economic considerations more than on kinship. The political units are similarly not lineage segments, but defined purely on regional and residential terms. As a result, marriages are manipulated more for economic ends, wealth being the main criterion of village standing. In marrying off a daughter, a man therefore attempts either to take a high bridegroom, or to create a link of kinship with an other family in the residential unit. Thus, in a circular way, polygyny decreases and the importance of affinals in the endogamous community increases. This can be seen in the bilateral character of the kinship tracks that form the factions in a mixed village, as contrasted to the patrilineal lineage segments of the tribal village. For comparison with the tribal system, these relations might be summarized as follows:

NON-TRIBAL:

power relations more given, = political units geographi- = economic emphasis on
economic in origin cally defined marriage — lower fre-
quency of polygynous marriage

63 The unity of the local group in the tribal system springs from an unquestioned solidarity; the leader of such a group has few if any coercive means at his disposal. His powers are of the patriarchal, informal, kinship-enabled type, and generally derive from the fact of kinship. This in conjunction with the marriage pattern tends to produce a rather small local group in the settled tribal area. Lineage

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

segments which have become widely separated in terms of descent 62-1
will continue as separate, endogamous segments, and in such a situation it is difficult for one segment to accept the informally enforced authority of the leader of another segment. Especially where the two segments interpret their relative status positions differently, conflict will result, and the group will split in two. Such ruptures, though they may to a certain extent harm the group, function at the same time to keep it of such a size that the «unquestioned» leader with no coercive mechanisms can indeed lead it. Furthermore, the wider tribal organization coordinates the small local groups, and thus enables a larger number of them to act as a body when such concerted action is necessary, e. g. in defence or feud. As suggested in the discussion of Hamawand formal organization, this process of segmentation and splitting has been clearly recognized in the political organization.

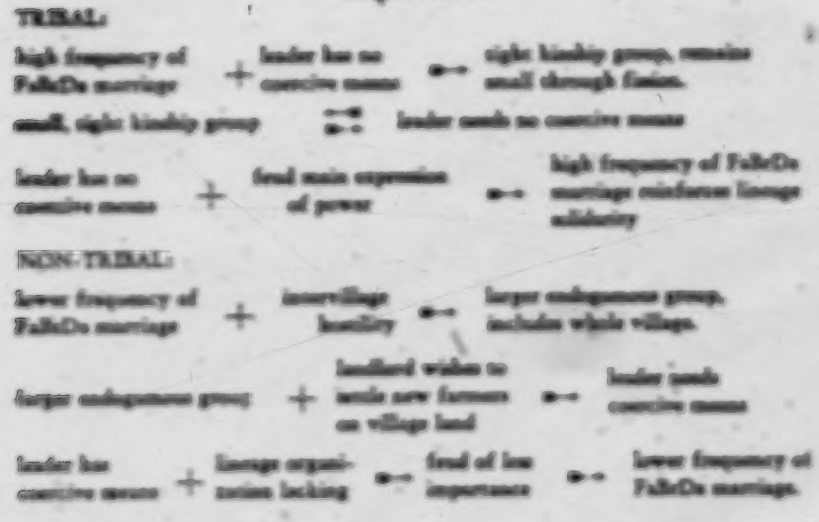
In the non-tribal, tenant, village, on the other hand, solidarity springs from the common subjection to a landowner. The status differences within the group become less elaborate, since the landowner is in a position to make or break any person's career, and inherited status thus becomes less significant. Hostilities tend to be channelized towards *other* villages (see below, p. 129), and village endogamy becomes more important than lineage unity. Even so, FaBrDa and other close kin marriage continues in a moderately high frequency, maybe primarily due to the traditional privilege of reduced brideprice.

At the same time, the difference in the political powers of the leader in the tribal as compared to the non-tribal village can be related to this. In the latter, unstructured kin groups (with agnatic bias) of varying size and relationship exist side by side, and the landowner will tend to perpetuate this condition, at times as a conscious policy, by alloting land to any competent farmer who desires it, no matter what his village of origin might be. The «unquestioned» type of leader found in the tribal local group, whose judgement carries authority in itself, could not even attempt to control such a group. Coercive means — here the implied powers as the agent

(2) and adviser of the landowner, with the right to evict from land etc. — are necessary.

These interrelations might be represented diagrammatically as follows: (Diagram No. 7).

Diagram No. 7.



THE BLOOD FEUD

In the tribal political system, the localized, territorial groups occupying the separate villages are thus in effect lineage segments. Their corporate unity is expressed in communal ownership of land, cooperation and coordination in herding and irrigation, and political unity for purposes of defence and raiding. The present section will attempt to explore the extent to which these lineage segments operate as corporate entities in the field relating to homicide and law: whether the principle of collective responsibility is applied and a pattern of blood feud results. A discussion of these problems should contribute further to our understanding of the nature of Kurdish lineage organization.

The association of a lineage organization, small endogamous communities, and a weak development of governmental institutions in

the Kurdish tribal system poses some unusual problems in this field. 621
In the travel literature, Kurdish tribes have a deserved reputation as [181]
warriors and bandits with little respect for human life, and without
further analysis of the situation it has been assumed that much of
their activities in this field is governed by a pattern of blood feuding.
There is however good reason to analyse the situation more carefully,
to discover just what patterns relating to homicide do in fact exist.

The material on which the following is based is, for obvious 628
reasons, very incomplete. Today homicide is the matter with which
the external administration is most concerned, and immediate inter-
vention on its part tends to prevent other action from being taken,
or fear of such intervention prevents actual case histories from
being discussed. All the data that I do have, however, indicates the
absence or very weak development of blood feuding patterns in
Southern Kurdistan. This absence may seem surprising, and it is
necessary to make clear just what is meant by the statement.

It seems useful in the analysis of this phenomenon to adhere to a
fairly specific definition of what is meant by institutionalized blood
feud. In its most characteristic form, it has been described in numer-
ous African societies, e. g. the Nuba (Nadel 1947): «In Hulban
[homicide] entails blood feud, which is carried on until exact revenge
has been achieved; a man must be killed for a man, a woman for a
woman; even in their age the two must be as closely matched as
possible. The duty to avenge devolves, not on an individual, but on
the whole clan . . . . . Again, the revenge is not directed against an
individual — the murderer himself — but against any member of
the enemy clan who satisfies the conditions of this law of rev-
enge . . .», p. 151). The pattern is thus a special form of institution-
alized revenge, whereby a whole group of persons is held collectively
responsible for the behavior of one of its members, and where the
wronged party is similarly not conceived as the individual or his
close family, but as the whole larger group to which he belonged.
The reaction is one of retaliation, governed by considerations of
equality, and subsidiarily one of compensation by traditionally stipu-
lated blood money (e. g. ibid. p. 251).

In this form, the blood feud is not found in Southern Kurdistan.

628 In fact, the basic principle underlying the institution, namely the
721 collective responsibility of the members of the descent group, seems to be lacking. Where the descent group is in fact the local community, one is faced with the problem of deciding whether the group at any one time acts *qua* descent group or *qua* local, that is territorial, unit. To analyse the data relating to this, it is necessary to make a distinction between (1) such collective responsibility relating to homicide, where a whole group is held responsible for the initial act of one member, and (2) the collective nature of other types of *feud and warfare*, where the whole group as a political unit is involved in the *initial* action — such as would be the case where a death resulted from any kind of organized and premeditated raid that one group might make upon another, with a primary interest in booty. If, in this latter case — though it might lead to retaliation — the retaliation were not governed by considerations of equality, it could not properly be called blood feud.

Incidents of type (2) have certainly been frequent in Southern Kurdistan. Incidents of type (1), on the other hand, did not come to my knowledge, either in historical material or on the contemporary scene. It would rather seem that a pattern of individual and particular *revenge* prevails, which extends only to very near kinsmen and accomplices. Certainly, the only case history which I can document fairly completely (see Appendix II) is appropriately described in such terms. In this pattern of revenge, the harm and retribution is definitely directed towards the person who committed the initial murder, only secondarily towards his nearest kinsmen, and that only if they have taken a clear stand in the conflict. There can be no feeling of collective responsibility within the whole descent group, since random retaliation within the lineage or even village of the offender is never considered. Conversely, only the very close kin of the deceased are motivated by the desire for revenge. The orphan would experience great difficulties in calling on lineage mates to assist him by virtue of their righteous indignation — he would do much better if he emphasized an economic motive, constituting himself as the leader of a small group of «bandits» in an attempt to rob his opponent. Thus, both in the case of homicide between

tives and between s[ections] of a single *tive*, the procedure seems to 623
be one of personal r[evenge], and not retaliation within the whole 721
group to which the [offender] belongs. It therefore seems useful to
emphasize this diff[erence] by limiting the term blood feud to its
typical form, as fo[und] e. g. among the Nuba, and to explore the
possible reasons wh[y] the jural concepts of collective responsibility,
on which the blood [feud] pattern is based, are *not* applied to a Kurdish
lineage group or se[gment] of such.

It is necessary to [emphasize the unique situation, as compared to 613
most societies desc[ribed] in the anthropological literature, in which 619
these jural princip[les] are to be applied. Kurdish lineages are not 623
organized factions [within] a community, as is often the case in other
societies; nor do th[ey] have the usual ramifying kinship connections
with other groups. [With] a high frequency of close kin marriage, as
described above, a [Kurdish lineage, and even the lineage segments
down to the villa[ge] level, are endogamous, socially isolated units.
They are, further[more], geographically isolated. The *tive* as a whole
occupies a large, c[ontiguous territory; the members of the *tive* are
essentially the sole [residents of that territory. The local group, the
village, is also the [lineage segment. There is no indigenous political
authority above th[e level of the maximal lineage; and such a maximal
lineage has no vi[tal relations with other groups (except a certain
minimum of trad[e]. The maximal lineage can therefore, in the
autonomous Kurdi[sh system, be regarded as «the society».

The concept of [collective responsibility thus hardly applies in the
usual sense in the [relations between segments of *different* lineages
—between groups [separate «societies». Jural principles of this type
can only be appl[ied within moderately homogeneous societies, where
any individual a[t sociological person is an approximate equivalent
of his co-lineage [men. (Fortes 1953). With the geographical separa-
tion of Kurdish [lineages, furthermore, feud between them would in
fact necessitate [expansion into «foreign» territory. The maximal 619
lineage is a politi[cally unified corporate group for purpose of defence, 623
and thus conflict [on any scale between segments would lead directly
to all-out war b[etween the lineages to which they belonged. In such
a situation, eco[nomic and other considerations favoring continued

peaceful relations would take precedence over the desire for personal revenge on the part of anyone but the most powerful leader. Personal conflicts between such leaders might well be patterned by the desire for revenge, and none the less involve whole groups in the conflict; but considerations of equality in retaliation would not be relevant on this ‹inter-societal› level, and blood feud is thus an inappropriate name for inter-tribal feuds, no matter what the immediate cause that ostensibly produced the feud were.

In a system with endogamous lineages, conflicts between subsections of a maximal lineage, of the type discussed in Appendix II, would seem to lend themselves more readily to solution by blood-feud. Whereas the individuals has few personal dealings with persons outside his *tira*, there is much room for disputes and conflicting claims within the endogamous, landholding *tira*. Such disputes would not immediately become ‹international› problems, subject to all the attendant tactical and practical considerations, but would create factions *within* the group, where concepts of justice and settlement be equality are more applicable. The only further prerequisite for a development of a blood feuding pattern is then a certain minimum strength of the kinship bonds, to ensure clear kinship alignment in the factions and near-universal identification with the kinship group and the action of kinsmen. This degree of development of the kinship bond seems to be lacking in Southern Kurdistan at the present time.

It should also be remembered that with the Kurdish type of lineage organization, the individual's loyalties are not to the descent group *in abstracto*, but are felt and expressed in terms of local groups, which very nearly correspond to the lineage segments. Because of this, any armed conflict between lineage segments will necessarily be in territorial terms; it will be a feud between villages. Thus complicating factors enter, involving territorial interests in areas where there is no surplus of arable land (e. g. much Hamawand territory today), conquest and vassalization of villages, etc. The larger territorial organization of the whole lineage is directly endangered by such internal inter-*village* wars, and characteristically enough it is the ‘unction as arbitrator in intra-lineage conflicts that

the tribal leader retains longest in the face of breakdown of tribal organization (cf. Mannı, p. 126). The ability to avoid or resolve such conflicts between villages is a prerequisite for the maintenance of lineage unity, and it is therefore essential that the principle of collective responsibility is *not* applied to the co-residents of the village community.

Leach (op. cit., pp. 16-7) discusses a feud between two competing lineages in the Rowanduz area. Though in effect a struggle for political supremacy between rival lineages, it appears to be governed by ideas of retaliation and equality. Hay (op. cit.) further lists the traditionally stipulated blood money to be paid for various classes of people. The Rowanduz area, as contrasted to Southern Kurdistan, is one where a number of well-organized lineages are in close contact. This is due in part to a difference in local history. Suleimani is an old center, and the whole territory was long subject to the feudal Baban administration, based on non-lineage principles. The Rowanduz mountain area, on the other hand, retained a presumably characteristic tribal organization, with numerous territorially separate, independent lineages till quite late, when it was united by conquest in a larger state system under the Mir og Rowanduz around 1830. It is interesting to speculate whether the fusion of numerous lineages into a larger state may not have changed some of the factors outlined above in such a way as to permit the institutionalized extension of the South Kurdish pattern of personal revenge to a pattern of blood feud.

In Southern Kurdistan, it is difficult to see what sanctions would be brought to bear against homicide within the maximal lineage, other than this pattern of personal revenge. Other mechanisms, once existing, may however have been disguised by now through the activities of the external administration.

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Chapter IV.

Non-political hierarchical organizations.

181 The theme of power is extremely important in Kurdish thinking,
591 in the sense I have used the expression *de-facto* power: the actual, total extent to which a person is able to lead people or otherwise induce them to act according to his wishes. There does not seem to be any single word in Kurdish to cover this concept, but, though a blanket term, it is found very useful in an analysis of Kurdish social organization. The Kurdish villager seems in effect to feel that the total status position of a person, and the de-facto power that he controls, stand in a direct proportional relation to one another. At any rate, this is the manner in which status and prestige is described. The type of delegated power vested in the clerk of some large, bureaucratic department is not found in any local, autonomous hierarchy or organization.

Formal political organization constitutes the main hierarchy of institutionalized power relationships; but there are also other hierarchies of status positions, regulating other fields of activity. A high status position in these hierarchies affords the holder the right to apply certain sanctions, positive or negative, to persons inferior to him in the hierarchy. He is thus able to influence the actions of his fellow villagers in much the same way as a political office-holder; he has *power*. Thus his part-status in a hierarchy not formally political contributes to his total status, and to the power he controls, and thereby becomes a factor in deciding his position in the total power

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hierarchy of his village and society. The formal political organization, discussed so far, is thus only one factor in the hierarchy of supra- and sub-ordination in the village, and it must be related to the other formal organizations or hierarchies that exist.

However, this phrasing of the relationship makes use of distinctions foreign to Kurdish thinking. As stressed in the discussion of general features of formal political organizations, the concept of an *office* is undeveloped, and relations of super- and sub-ordination spring from differences in the *total* status of individuals. The Kurdish villager is not concerned with abstract features of village organization — he sees the organization of his own village, and other organizations affecting him, in terms of hierarchies of *individuals*, of named and familiar people, each with a familiar total status. But to analyse the relationships and clarify some of the principles operative in this type of organization, it is necessary to break down these total statuses into component elements. Previously, the formal political hierarchies have been discussed. In the present section, some other status positions and hierarchies will be divorced from their contexts in observed total statuses, and described. It is not implied that the total status of individuals is merely a sum-total of these part-statuses; the integration of such part-statuses into a total status will be discussed later, after the village scene, where such integration takes place, has been described. Our present concern is with the principles governing these various, analytically separable, hierarchies, and the part-statuses defined by these hierarchies.

There is a distinction to be made between these *hierarchies* of institutionalized positions of super- and sub-ordination in an organization — hierarchies of part-statuses — and a more general *scale* of prestige. A person's prestige depends on the degree to which he approaches certain ideals; and one may distinguish between various such scales, relating to degree of piety, age, wealth, etc. The prestige that accrues to the individual from high rating on such scales is convertible into influence and power; part-statuses in a hierarchy, on the other hand, give power directly. To complicate the situation further, high rating on a scale of power might also be said to contribute to a person's prestige. Several scales have been implied in the

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previous discussion, and are indeedimplicit in the systems of status hierarchies. An attempt will be made to relate the various status positions to ideals expressed on such scales, and in the final paragraphs of the section to outline themain scales on which individuals may be rated.

ECONOMIC CLASSES

The village hierarchy of class differences, based on division of labor and attendant differences inwealth, has been discussed above, pp. 20 ff. This hierarchy is, as we saw, produced primarily by the feudal principle of delegation of work on the land, and is conceptualized in terms of distinct social classes, each with traditionally defined rights and privileges in their relations to each other. Each class is thus a status category, and they are arranged in a hierarchy leading from *laborer* through *tenant farmer*, occasionally an *intermediary capitalist*, and culminating in the *landowner*. This is in itself a power hierarchy, since each superior status directly gives opportunity for control over persons of inferior status positions, within the traditional limits. The *freeholding farmer* class, on the other hand, occupies a status partly divorced from this immediate power hierarchy. Characteristically, where such freeholding farmers are found in a village partly controlled by a large landowner, every effort seems to be made on the part of the landowner to secure property rights also to the remaining fraction of land,and thus place all members of the community in the unambiguous hierarchy of control and power. Consequently freeholding farmerswith property of any significance are generally found in tribally organized communities, and a dichotomy between only freeholding vs. only tenant communities generally holds true. *Freeholding farmers* as a class tend to be on a par with the *tenant farmer* class in thelarger class system, and frequently control a small group of *laborers*, and in certain areas also the serf class, the *Merkjin*. The main features of the reciprocal relations between these classes have been sketched previously.

The special position of the *shepherd* remains to be discussed. He is essentially a laborer, working for a stipulated annual payment in kind (grain), but also receives a sheet of unleavened bread daily

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from each household he serves. The status of the shepherd is rather low, and he is frequently a foreigner in the village. In point of fact, many of the field laborers are also of foreign origin, but they become more or less assimilated in the community, whereas the solitary occupation of the shepherd prevents or delays his complete assimilation. — In general, the sheep and goats tend to be herded by the small boys of the village — sons of laborers — and the adult shepherd or herdsman is put in charge only of the large cattle.

The position as mullah (roughly equivalent to priest), regarded as an occupational category in the economic scale, is of minor importance in the small Kurdish villages, and is generally supplemented by farming. Other resident occupational statuses are rarely found.

The following is an example of the class composition of a small tenant village:

	households	persons
absentee landowner	—	—
tenant farmers (incl. one mullah)	25	123
laborers	5	22
shepherd	1	5
widows with no near kin	2	4
total	33	152

RELIGIOUS CATEGORIES

We have so far distinguished two main hierarchies, one governing the field of political organization, and related to a scale of administrative authority, the second governing the economic field, and related to a scale of wealth. A remaining group of named status positions, less clearly hierarchically organized, governs the religious field. These are the positions of Derwish, *Sheikh*, *Sayyid*, Mullah, and *Hadji*.

Derwishes. The derwish religious fraternities illustrate, in their form and function, most clearly a general trend in the Kurdish villager's interpretation of Islam, and how the religious field may be brought into relation with the power hierarchy in the village community.

The Kurdish emphasis on power is in direct conflict with Moslem

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The Kurdish emphasis on power is in direct conflict with Moslem ideals of scholarly sanctity, of meekness towards God, and the importance of good acts — ideals to which indeed all Kurds pay lipservice, and which certainly also have some influence upon Kurdish thinking and action. Where a world religion of foreign ethnic origin has been adopted, such discrepancies between the «ethos» of the religion and of the local culture would seem to be unavoidable, especially in the case of a religion as specifically concerned with social conditions and legislation as Islam. Certainly, the Kurdish villager attempts to the best of his ability to follow Islam, and these discrepancies are largely unexpressed and unrealized. Only among the more sophisticated tradesmen of the towns can one hear in part quite explicit statements such as: «Islam is a desert religion, belonging to the Arabs, and does not suit us Kurds of the mountains.»

It is in the local trend of interpretation of a world religion, in the aspects of the religion that are over-stressed, that local sentiments exert their pressure. The main expression of un-orthodox religiosity among Kurdish villagers is found in the development of the derwish sects or religious brotherhoods, widely spread in the rural districts, and generally characteristic of the less privileged sections of the population.

Such derwish brotherhoods are probably found in all Moslem countries, but seem to vary greatly in content between different ethnic groups. Everywhere, however, their basic dogmatic position in relation to the orthodox church of Islam is the same, and apparently reflects a need among the less educated classes. Islam, as propounded in the Mosque, is a formal, coldly intellectualized doctrine of the complete separation of God and Man, of God's supreme wisdom and power and Man's knowledge of it only through the Koran, accompanied by a scholarly legal and ritualistic interpretation of this basic text. Fundamental is the complete separate nature of God and Man, and man's inability to bridge this gap. The whole heterodox gamut from Sufi mystics to essentially shamanistic spirit-medium cults represent attempts at direct communication with God — at bridging this very un-bridgeable gap. The Kurdish derwish sects occupy a position towards the shamanistic pole of this continuum. Awareness of, or communication with God, is obtained by

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rhythmic incantations, drumming and rhythmic movements of the body, and self mortification; weeping and seizures are frequent.

In the following short description of some aspects of these Kurdish derwish brotherhoods, I shall attempt to illustrate the great value attached to *power*, and how this invades even the religious field in the face of the basicly fatalistic doctrines of Islam. The derwish brotherhoods constitute hierarchies in which the attainment of power, though of a very special kind, is regarded as one of the ultimate goals. At present, however, recruitment to the brotherhoods seems to be essentially from the most underprivileged class, people with minimal power and prestige in the social system. The derwish brotherhoods would thus seem to be a type of «religion of the disinherited», in which a substitute for social power is offered. Rather than being of direct relevance to the power distribution in the Kurdish village and countryside, the following should show the relevance of a concept of *power* in all fields of Kurdish culture, and constitute a justification for regarding power distribution as an essential and subjectively highly valued aspect of all Kurdish institutions.

The derwish brotherhoods are basically associations of lay persons with religious inclinations, led by a holy man, a *Sheikh* (descendant of the Prophet). Most of the members are ordinary farmers who by a simple statement of purpose become members of the group, and thereby benefit from the holy powers vested in the *Sheikh*. Obviously, the greater the holy powers of the *Sheikh*, the more his derwish followers will benefit; and Leaders of Derwish of great repute are sought out by potential derwishes from a large neighboring area, and s. times by people from very distant places.

A naive and direct statement of the fundamental idea and practice follows, being essentially a word-by-word translation of an explanation given by an ordinary village derwish, of no great standing or mystic reputation:

«There is a great man, a *Sheikh*, descendant of the Prophet. All descendants of Mohammed have some extra, religious power; this *Sheikh* has very much. Being close to that *Sheikh*, and doing as he wishes, makes a man near to God, makes his soul clearer.

[Haman] decided to become a derwish, so as to be nearer to God.

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In the next life, Mohammed will pray for all derwishes, ask God to give them pardon. To become a derwish you must renounce all the faults and evil thoughts and acts of men, and always be good. Anyone can become a derwish — young, old, man, woman. So he went to the great Shaikh Kader. And the *Shaikh* advised him to be good, always; he told him to protect Islam, follow all the ethical rules, etc. He stayed only five minutes the first time — the *Shaikh* only takes your hand in his, tells you all the rules of derwish, and blesses you. Then afterwards, you pay him regular visits, as often as you wish — once a month, or every two months, or even once a year. Sometimes you give gifts to the *Shaikh*, though you don't ever have to.»

There thus seem to be no elaborate, much less mystic, rites of initiation to membership, as reported from e. g. the Persian area. The only visible sign of derwish-hood among men (who in fact form the great majority of followers) is letting your hair grow long — though there are, incidentally, no special taboos or precautions connected with cutting it.

The explicit logic and ethical position of the group, and the motivation for persons to join it, thus seem quite simple. Between the various derwish groups there is little room for conflict, since their differences are not dogmatic, but merely a question of the efficacy and greatness of the holy powers of one holy man as compared to an other. Similarly, except for the fundamental approach, which would rarely be questioned by the uneducated villager, there is no dogmatic conflict with the official church — the same ethical and ritual rules are propounded by the Derwish Leader and the mullah, and any further admonishments and elaborations introduced by the one merely serve to support this fundamental body of ritual. The more heterodox interpretations attached to this common body of ritual are generally overlooked by the mullah as lying largely outside his domain.

But it would be overlooking a very important aspect of the derwish organization if these statements were taken at their face values, and it were seen merely as a more emotional and personal interpretation of Islamic doctrine; as being a religion of the disinherited

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in the same way as are numerous of the smaller sects of the Christian church. On the contrary, the theme of *power* is stressed and elaborated, corresponding to its importance in the Kurdish value system and the more conventional religious possibilities largely played down. Great religious fervor is generally lacking among the villagers, even among dervishes. Fraser (no date), an early traveller in the area, notes with disappointment the lack of superstitions, fear of ghosts etc. among his Kurdish friends. In accord with this, the point that is stressed is not contemplative or mystic, but might be said to be the aspects of potential power resulting from closeness to God, with great interest in the *overt* signs of this potential, covert power. It seems to satisfy the subjective needs of the underprivileged group not by being an escapist religion of the next life, but by offering its adherents a present substitute for the highly valued political and economic powers they can not attain. To demonstrate the efficacy of the great powers they control, the dervishes rely on certain signs, the most important being their ability to do wierd and amazing things, generally feats of the type one associates with Indian fuqirs.

The pattern of the delegation of this power illustrates somethin of its nature. It all centers in the *Shaikh*, in the present example Shaikh Abdul Karim. He belongs to the same family as Shaikh Mahmud, and traces descent as well as the origins of his powers through the revered Kaka Hamma, from whom also Shaikh Mahmud has received his sacred powers. The immediate predecessor of Shaikh Abdul Karim was his father, Shaikh Kader — a man of considerable influence and intellect (he accompanied Shaikh Said on their successful visit to the Sultan, cf. p. 42). Succession to the position as Leader of Derwish is by appointment by the *Shaikh* himself. No rule of primogeniture is observed (Shaikh Abdul Karim is the second of three brothers), the person showing the greatest ability is chosen. This need not be a son, though it usually is — naturally, it must be within the family, since descent from the Prophet is essential.

There seems to be an unresolved problem here, in that the sacred powers are part of the «biological» inheritance of the descendants of the Prophet, yet vary in strength between different lineages of them. And these lineages may increase or decline in power over a

792 period of time. The *Shaikh* may delegate power in his lifetime, but can not transfer it *ex dōc* to his appointed successor. The relative powers of derwish leaders are evaluated, in part by the past exploits of their lineage, in part by their actual ability to demonstrate their sacred powers by «miracles» of standardized types.

The sacred powers, or «powers from Good forces», may be delegated to individuals for longer or shorter periods of time, so these can bless and initiate novices. Such intermediaries are often members of minor *shaikh* lineages and have some reputation and powers of their own. More important from the individual derwish's point of view however is the power of the *Shaikh* to bless his followers with the ability to perform certain feats, readily demonstrated to me, such as eating burning charcoal, extinguishing burning torches in their mouth, swallowing poisonous snakes, perforating the cheeks with pins, the abdomen with knives and spears, all without harm to the performer. According to rumor, these are only the more conservative of their activities, seances with flying heads and strange incarnations being well within the ability of some derwishes. Characteristic of nearly all these special abilities is that they are non-instrumental, they are not directed towards any practical ends.

According to explanatory statements, the mechanics of this delegation of power is extremely simple. The faithful derwish who has shown his moral virtue and seriousness of purpose for some time by faithfully observing all the rules of derwish, may if he so wishes go to his *Shaikh* and ask to be given a specific skill or power, such as would enable him to eat burning charcoal, or perforate his abdomen without pain or harm. If the *Shaikh* deems this wise, he simply lays his hands on the derwish's head and blesses him, telling him that from now on he has that specific power. No period of training is necessary — the power has been delegated to him, and he may use this overt sign as a sign of the power vested in the *Shaikh* and his followers. — I was not able to ascertain whether specific powers actually follow family lines among derwishes, or in fact tend to be delegated after a period of residence with the Shaikh. Obviously, the above statement can be regarded only as the «party line» on the subject.

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The situations in which most demonstrations of these special powers take place are quite significant. There is rarely any attempt on the part of the dervish to show his control over mystic forces with his own fellow villagers as an audience (though one such case was observed, following derogatory remarks to the dervish in question). Usually, the feats are performed for a group of fellow dervishes, preferably during the celebration of Moslem festivals in the village of the Sheikh, when several hundred visitors, some non-dervish as well as dervish, may assemble there. Only a quite small group was observed in action, but in this case at least there was a lack of staging and dramatic build up, a naive directness in the performance, a considerable un-coloured critical evaluation of each performer by his colleagues, all of which incidentally contrasted sharply with the verbal tone of the performance of a western stage hypnotist or «fakir». Any gross type of hoax would be out of the question, and in fact quite pointless, since the audience generally consists of fellow dervishes. The performance seems largely given for the satisfaction of the performer himself. The personal triumph was repeatedly expressed in the question: «Does your religion give you powers like these?».

The nature of controls within the dervish brotherhood is quite informal. There is vagueness as to what would happen if a person misuses these delegated powers. Dervishes, being good, simple people simply would not misuse them — in case this did happen, the Sheikh would revoke the powers, and other dervishes might give the culprit a thorough beating. What types of pressures and counterpressures might be brought to bear on individuals higher in the hierarchy — minor Sheikhs with a somewhat independent reputation — is difficult to say.

The Sheikh himself is today in a difficult position, and the extent of his actual powers difficult to evaluate. His followers being found almost wholly among the uneducated rural people, he is regarded by most persons in the landowning and educated class as a cynical opportunist, who traffics in poor peoples' ignorance. His mode of life being moderately austere, and his wealth considerably less than that of many of his critics, this does not sound altogether probable.

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The father of the present *Shaikh* is said to have used his influence with considerable effect — certainly, a very exhalted status is associated with the position as Leader of Darwish, as far as the village population is concerned.

The individual darwish, on the other hand, has no recognized or defined status. The relative position of the darwish in the village community will be discussed more fully below, when it can be related to the other hierarchies of organization. Being largely recruited from the most underprivileged sections of the population, membership in the darwish group is often regarded as a badge of the lowest class. In face-to-face relations they are, on the other hand, afforded a certain respect, springing from an undeniable awe or fear of their strange powers.[1])

Where the service of a mullah is undesirable, the local darwish tends to function in his place, by virtue of his assumed greater knowledge of religious ritual. Thus a darwish who is generally accepted as being knowledgable, may attain some status, but that primarily by virtue of his knowledge, and not qua darwish. Thus, the power obtainable through membership in the darwish brotherhood is mostly of a subjective and substitute kind. Their special powers are of a symbolic and expressive, not of an instrumental type. Strikingly, these special powers and strange feats are exhibited mostly in rarely exclusive darwish meetings, and are rarely directed outward, toward village spectators — though secrecy, on the other hand, is made no point of, and any one who wishes to be present may attend most

[1]) Something of the position of the darwish may more clearly be illustrated by a summary characterization of the darwishes with whom I came most into contact (not including those residing in the home village of the Leader of Darwish):

a) Highly eccentric, with considerable temper. Officiated at occasional funerals etc. Reputed to be able to perform cheeks and skewers with ease.

b) Rather inconsequential. Sacrificed a sheep when his watch (unique in the village) started showing discrepancy with the sun — was ridiculed for this by fellow villagers.

c) and d) Quiet, ordinary serfs in appearance. Accused of scheming against Homewood landlords.

e) Unintelligent brother of village headman. No special accomplishments.

f) Ordinary farmer. No special accomplishments.

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meetings. We are left with a religious brotherhood, vested with mystic powers, but where membership is regarded as a badge of low social status. The various overt signs of these mystic powers are not systematically manipulated in front of an uninitiated audience, to enhance the position of the performer; nor is the brotherhood developed into a secret society, the secrecy and exclusiveness of which might give status. The interpretation followed here, that membership in the brotherhood offers subjective satisfaction, giving the underprivileged person a field in which he feels that he too can manipulate and control power, seems the only constructive alternative.

Shaikhs and Sayyids. The category of persons called *Shaikhs* and *Sayyids* are, as the dervishes, in a somewhat ambiguous position; but they may, as we have seen in the case of Shaikh Mahmud, make use of their position to great advantage in the political field. Essentially, a *Shaikh* is in Kurdish a descendant of the Prophet Mohammed, reckoned patrilineally from Ali, Mohammed's son-in-law, and corresponding to the Arabic *Sayyid*. The general position of esteem in which such persons are held is indicated by the term itself, *Shaikh* in Kurdish being borrowed from the Arabic, where it is a political title for tribal chief or elder; *Sayyid* in the Arabic of pre-Islamic times having the similar meaning of elder. Actually, both the terms *Shaikh* and *Sayyid* are used today in Kurdish to indicate descent from the Prophet — a distinction between the two will be made later; the present discussion will concern the *Shaikhs*, who in Southern Kurdistan are by far the larger and more important of the two groups.

By virtue of their descent from the Prophet, *Shaikhs* rate high on a religious scale of sanctity, and it is believed that they embody a variable degree of unseen good power. This vague sanctity is however divorced from implications of greater piety; no significantly greater morality seems to be expected of the *Shaikhs*, and membership in the descent group does not automatically affect the social position of an individual.

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To clarify the position of the *Shaikh* group, its distribution and internal structure should be examined. Logically enough, *Shaikhs* are not found among members of tribes (*ilwa*), since tribal groups constitute patrilineal maximal lineages, and no member of the *ilwa*

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can trace patrilineal descent from Ali unless the *whole tira* claims such descent. None of the South Kurdish *tiras* attempt this, however. *Shaikhs* are consequently characteristic of the non-tribal areas, where they occupy the whole gamut of social positions from landless laborer to feudal lord.

In characteristic Kurdish fashion, *Shaikh* families tend to split up into small endogamous lineage segments, and, though the census materials gathered from a few villages is not statistically reliable in the matter, there is strong suggestion that FaBrDa or other close kin marriage reaches considerably higher frequency than usual in tenant villages, and approaches that found in the politically organized lineages, the *tiras*. However, any embracive organization uniting the whole *Shaikh* descent group, or major segments of it, such as would in fact convert it into a type of widely dispersed *tira*, is lacking. It would on the other hand be equally misleading to think of the *Shaikh* group as an endogamous caste, since extra-group marriages do in fact take place, and the emphasis is not on *Shaikh* endogamy but, in usual Kurdish fashion, on *local lineage* endogamy. It is convenient to think more in terms of these local endogamous *Shaikh* lineages, where they are found in the village community, and relate their comparatively higher endogamy to an effort to retain a special status in the *local* community by not dispersing kinship obligations too widely in that community. Where *Shaikh* families occupy higher social positions, this stress on lineage endogamy tends to disappear, or seems to reflect efforts to prevent the dispersal of family property through the multiple Koranic inheritance rights.

An example of a *Shaikh* lineage group of tenant farmers, residing in a small village community, might be given. Of 33 households in the village, 7 are of the *Shaikh* lineage, the remaining 26 belonging to various larger and smaller kin groups. Of the heads of these 7 *Shaikh* households, 4 have married a FaBrDa, 2 another close relative, and only 1 a non-relative from outside the community (the sister of a neighboring headman). At least in this generation, there is thus no intermarriage with other families in the local community.

The head of the *Shaikh* lineage is regarded as the most important man in the village, but he is not elected *kikha* (village headman).

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The present *Aikhe*, whose father and grandfather held the post before him, belongs to another, slightly larger kin block, counting at least 9 households. Furthermore, the frequency of family endogamy in this family of which the *Aikhe* is the head is less than 50 %, which may account for his «wider appeal» in the community. Thus the emphasis on the special status of the *Sheikh* lineage also tends to isolate this lineage, in part to their disadvantage.

The majority of the *Sheikhs* in the village are tenant farmers, and tend to be among the better situated. One occupies the position as mullah, to which his son will clearly succeed him. However, one of the *Sheikh* household heads is a landless laborer, giving a class distribution in the *Sheikh* lineage of 5 farmers / 1 laborer, as compared to 18 farmers / 4 laborers in the remainder of the community. The class position of the *Sheikh* lineage as a whole is thus not significantly high.

The status of this small *Sheikh* lineage might be contrasted to that of the above mentioned Leaders of Derwish, or to that of Sheikh Mahmud, both of whom have achieved their high position in part by virtue of their descent from the Prophet. The most reasonable generalization seems to be that membership in the *Sheikh* descent group defines a type of position in the religious field which contributes to the general esteem in which a person is held, and which may, in certain situations, contribute to justify a high position of actual power, but which in no way automatically ascribes such power to the individual.

A category of travelling holy men, similarly claiming descent from Mohammed, are given the Arabic name *Seyyid* by Kurdish villagers. Whereas the Kurdish *Sheikhs* claim descent specifically from Hussein, one of Mohammed's two grandsons, through a medieval Persian theologian, the claims of the wandering *Seyyids* are more variable. On the other hand, this reference to religious sanctity forms the basis of their livelihood. The spellation *Sheikh* need only imply high rating on a purely religious scale of sanctity — *Seyyids* convert this into a definite status position, fundamental to their occupation. Preferably conspicuously clothed, and wearing green head-dress as a symbol of their status, they ride from village to village carrying old

792 holy books from which they can tell of the past and the future.
557 They also sell good-luck charms, love-charms, charms against sickness, etc. Being residents of the larger towns, however, they only appear on the village scene as transients of rather low status.

Diagram No. 8. The scales and statuses of the religious field.

793 *The Mullah.* Whereas the position of a *Sheikh* depends upon his
559 rating on the scales of sanctity and sacred powers, the position of the mullah is related to the scale of sanctity, and to a scale of learning and piety. High rating on the scale of sanctity springs directly from the office, while the degree of learning and piety depends upon the individual's behavior, and is consequently variable.

793 The position as mullah is a true status position, since it defines a
795 place in an institutional hierarchy — that of the larger church
559 organization — but since it is related also to the scale of piety, the actual relative status ascribed to specific mullahs in their villages may vary considerably. Thus again, the lack of development of the concept of an *office* has its effect; any separation of the individual's official and private capacity is impossible, and no clear definition of the status of the mullah, as divorced from the individual achievements of a specific mullah, is possible. The very weak regional organization of the church is in part responsible for this — indeed, it is

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misleading to speak of an inclusive church organization in the sense one knows it in the West. The actual qualifications of individual mullahs vary tremendously, and financial arrangements for the support of the Mosque are, as far as village mosques are concerned, entirely in the hands of the local community. Yet traditionalism and informal controls give a certain unity and enforce certain limits on deviations from a vague norm.

The position as mullah is an achieved status with completely open recruitment. Successful application to the study of the Koran leads eventually to initiation. There is a tendency for *Sheikhs* and *Seyyids* to be over-represented, but this seems primarily due to a higher frequency of religious inclinations, resulting from their automatic bias in orientation. Frequently a dervish will be willing to support his son through some or all of the necessary years of reading and study, and thus achieve for the son what was beyond the reach of the father. At times, through an early interest in the teachings of the village mullah, a boy in a secularly oriented family will find his way into the religious field. A striking number of the students are blind, and depend in their studies on the help of their friends.

The traditional pattern is for the student to spend an unspecified number of years roaming from mosque to mosque, seeking out the teachers of high repute and remaining with each for whatever length of time he wishes (see Appendix III). In this period, as well as studying the Koran and the legal interpretation of the text, the student should become familiar with other religious writing, in Persian as well as in Arabic. Finally, when the student and whatever teacher he happens to be with at the time feels he is prepared, he is made to give a sermon, and after a ritual is given the white headdress of the mullah, as well as a diploma confirming his status.

During his studies, the future mullah is dependent on his family or on individual charity for his subsistence. Later, as a full-fledged mullah, he must make whatever arrangements he can. The positions in the mosques of the towns are now government supported, but in the village the office is supported by local resources only. The community expresses its wish to have a mullah and the extent of its ability to pay — generally by revenue on dedicated land and a

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minimal tax pr. head in the village, payable at the end of the holy month of Ramadan. This frequently must be augmented by agricultural work on the part of the mullah. It seems that the villagers are free to appoint any initiated mullah of their choice to office; once he is appointed, however, it is, at least in practice, impossible to dismiss him.

The actual role of the village mullah is evidently today in a state of rapid change, and considerably reduced as compared to Ottoman times. He has been relieved of a great number of his civil functions — e. g. marriages are not valid unless a license has been procured from the civil administration, and though the mullah still performs the ceremony, his importance is naturally reduced. The very dominant position as judge has also been greatly reduced by the secularization of the state and effective administration of Iraq's civil code.

A second role is that of the educator — the mullah will give rather ineffectual lessons in the Koran to the sons of important villagers — the only schooling they will ever have — and he may also have advanced students visiting him for a period. Except for spreading a certain knowledge of the religion, however, this school of the mullah's does not seem to be of any great consequence, and the mullah himself remains the only literate person in the village.

His main role at present parallels that of the priest in Western society, in that it is concerned predominantly with religious questions in a largely secular world. The mullah calls to morning and evening prayer, gives a sermon on Friday, is especially active in the holy month of Ramadan. In all his activities, he should set an example to his villagers. The weight given to his opinions thus depends on his learning and personal piety, but at the same time, if they are developed to any appreciable degree, these same traits will tend to separate him physically and emotionally from the community and place him in the position of a spectator.

Consequently, he does not achieve the power position in the village that one might have expected. The mullah with low rating on the scale of learning and piety will be disregarded by the villagers — they may not even attend his services, as in the case of one village studied, where the sermons had been largely discontinued and the

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responsibility for religious education taken over by the leader of the local *Sheikh* family. On the other hand, an intelligent mullah, though often formalistic and introvert in his orientation, may play a considerable part in improving the intellectual and sanitary standard of the village (the subject of clean and unclean having importance in a religious context), but does not seem to attempt to extend his influence any wider. His high intellectual standard and foreign values tend to alienate him from the «petty squabbles» of the village; and an ambitious attitude has no real place in the piously fatalistic Islamic world view. To the extent he does not convert his status and prestige into a de-facto power position, the mullah might be said not to be fully integrated into the social structure of the village. He is similarly in no sense an indispensable resident in the village community — very frequently, he is called in only for funerals, naming ceremonies etc., or these functions may even be performed by a local derwish or *Sheikh*. The pattern of training blind boys, necessarily marginal to village society, as mullahs, may in part be related to an appreciation of this marginal position which the mullah occupies.

Hadji. The *Hadji*, on the other hand, is an ordinary member of the village community. His position is related to the scale of piety, and derives simply from having completed a pilgrimage to Mecca. The title, however, is one of considerable respect — in part because it also implicitly indicates high rating on the scale of wealth.

The whole institution of the pilgrimage is the result of the command by the Prophet Mohammed, that any man who has the necessary means to make the pilgrimage *and* support his family at home, or whose family is able to support itself without him, should once in his lifetime journey to the holy city of Mecca. Thus the title of *Hadji* indicates (a) a pious eagerness to follow the command of Mohammed, and (b) moderately prosperous circumstances. One rarely finds more than 3—4 *Hadjis* in any one village; these will tend to be at least among the leading members of their community.

Formerly, the initiative was individual and the journey hazardous, often achieved by relatively greater physical exertion and less expense, and the title of *Hadji* was thus less of a symbol of wealth than at present.

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than at present. The route from the Suleimani area went by caravan to Basra in the Persian Gulf, by ship to Jiddah (or even by caravan across the Arabian peninsula) and on foot from Jiddah to Mecca — involving often more than a full year of travel. Today, the time expended is in the neighborhood of two months, travel being by bus to Baghdad and across to Beirut, ship through the Suez to Jiddah, and bus up to the walls of Mecca. Total expenses average some £ 200. The pattern is generally one of group travel — in 1948, a group of approximately 60 persons from the Suleimani area journeyed together.

The moral-religious status connected with the title of *Hadji* is of negligible importance. There is some feeling that in situations of petty conflict, a *Hadji* should attempt to mediate, and that higher moral standards are to be expected from him. More important is its connections with wealth as a type of conspicuous consumption, and in this it parallels the widely distributed type of honorific title dependent on having gone through a «pot-latch» series of feasts[1]). However, in the competitive and informal Kurdish village organization, the honorific title of *Hadji* is not by itself of any appreciable consequence in the de-facto power hierarchy, and must be supported by a continued position of relative wealth.

KINSHIP

In addition to the formal hierarchies governing the political, the economic, and the religious fields, there remains the field of kinship. It might be pointed out that the household organization, and attendant kinship obligations, described above pp. 29 ff, represents a hierarchical organization of basicly the same type, but relating to a unit smaller than the village, in contrast with the other, more extensive organizations. Needless to say, the patriarch of a large household gains prestige and is vested with de-facto power by

[1]) An example from a culturally and geographically parallel area is offered by the Kafirs of Afghanistan, where the whole social structure of the village community is based on a hierarchy of such honorific titles, attained by giving stipulated numbers of feasts (cf. G. S. Robertson, *1896, pp. 434 ff.*).

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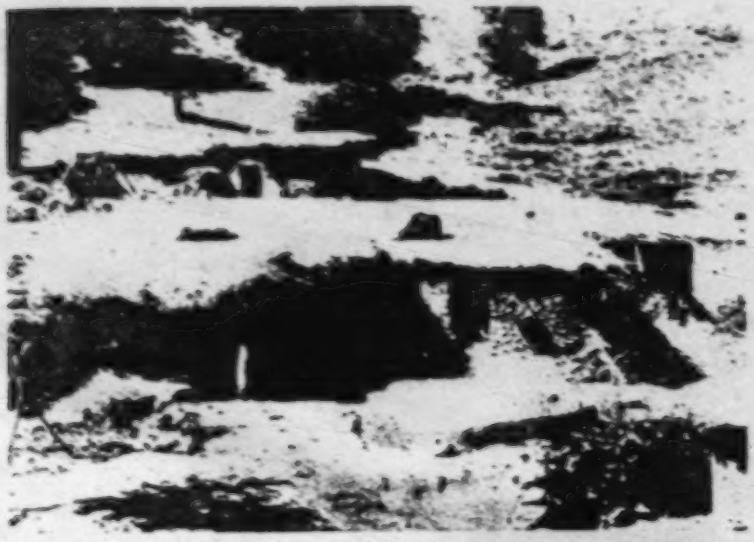

Houses in a tenant village (three households).

361

A Hamawand village.

[opposite p. 96 -- Analyst]

592 virtue of his position in the household — prestige and power that contributes very significantly to his total status in the village community.

SCALES

554 I have used the term office for an actual formal position in an organizational hierarchy; status and part-status for this position *and* the prestige that belongs with it. In a system where the rights and privileges connected with a political office are not clearly defined, and a separation of a person's private vs. official capacities is impossible, the power of a political official, or other person in a status hierarchy, will in large part depend on the particular person holding the position. In a sense, there is negligible prestige attached to the position itself; an individual must, in his private capacity, embody the prestige that is necessary to fill the position successfully. Thus the variegated sources of prestige *outside* the formal hierarchies become important to an understanding of how the formal structure functions in the village.

One may, as suggested above, profitably think in terms of certain *scales* by which persons are evaluated, high rating on these scales conferring prestige to the individual. Such scales are of several types, some connected with the life cycle of the individual, or related to the degree to which certain attributes are found in a person, others measuring the degree to which an individual approaches a certain ideal stereotype in his behavior. They may in part define conflicting or mutually exclusive ideals. — Put differently, this means that the prestige derived from high rating on one of these scales may be particularly relevant in a certain organization or role, as in the case of sanctity and its relation to the *Shaikh* status. Other scales are more universally applicable, as that of relative age. However, no matter what its sources may be, *the prestige of a person qualifies him for a certain relative power position in the village, potentially or actually formalized as a named status position.*

Obviously, any number of these scales may be constructed, and the present list pretends to do little more than summarize certain

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554 important Kurdish values relating to individual prestige. On the other hand, they are not pure constructs of the investigator, since they do represent verbalized ideals which the Kurdish villager is aware of as alternative modes of behavior in situations. The following are some important scales on which the prestige of a Kurdish villager may be measured:

Family: (a) prestige derived from descent from a person or persons with high prestige, or (b) membership in a large effective kinship unit.

Age: prestige derived from experience and maturity, increasing up to the onset of senility.

Sex: dichotomy favoring the male and relations in the male line.

Wealth: prestige from capital, real or movable property, and occupations tending to produce such.

Sacred powers: the extent of «unseen powers from Good Forces» delegated to the person.

Sanctity: the actual embodyment of sacred powers, or sacred position achieved by personal suffering and renunciation of the world.

Learning and piety: prestige from knowledge of, and conformity to, Moslem religious and moral ideals.

Honor and Bravery: the degree of approach to the Kurdish «hero» — physical prowess, valor, a certain recklesness, respect for women, kindness to the poor, unending hospitality, etc.

THE VILLAGE HIERARCHY

621 The formal political structures, and certain subsidiary hierarchies have been outlined, and it was pointed out how the actual power connected with positions in these hierarchies is dependent upon the prestige of the persons occupying them. The organization of the village thus becomes one of super- and sub-ordination of individuals, and universal relevance of status differences in the relations of these individuals.

However, because of the presence of several separable hierarchies of organization, the village relations of super- and sub-ordination do

not have an opportunity to freeze and become converted into a formal structure (cf. the relations between Hamawand and *Meskjin*, and the latter's use of the derwish brotherhoods). Individuals are constantly aligning into factions, manipulating these hierarchies, and the superordination of any particular formal status position will constantly be questioned, and must therefore be supported by the necessary superordination in terms of actual prestige. Thus, if the village were left to itself, the formal village organization of super- and sub-ordination would at any time relate to the differences in total prestige between the individuals holding these formal positions. 621

An external factor does however enter in the autonomous Kurdish system, which tends to produce a de-facto power hierarchy more or less different from this «ideal» hierarchy. With the backing of an outside force, individuals may have powers vested in them out of proportion to their actual prestige in the local community. This type of outside force will usually be related to wealth — in effect, before the country was subjected to external administration, the economic ability to *buy* riflemen and thus tyranize a village or section, as in the case of many feudal lords, or on the other hand the ability of one tribe or group, from superior numbers or organization, to suppress other tribes or groups.

The de-facto power hierarchy will then be determined by the balance between the one faction's ability to *buy* or otherwise introduce power into the system, as compared to the other faction's ability to *rally* supporters, referring to the «ideal» hierarchy based on prestige. An important feature of this balance is the fact that the further the de-facto hierarchy differs from the «ideal» hierarchy, the relatively more external power is needed to maintain the position, since the opposing faction's ability to *rally* supporters increases rapidly with the extent of the abuse. — Obviously, the actual balance varies over the area and through time, and a diversity of types of village organization results.

We have thus arrived at some appreciation of the structural reasons for the confusing variety of types of formal organization in the South Kurdish area. At the moment, however, we are not concerned with the specific historic events in these factional con-

621 flicts, producing the present distribution of types, since these depend to considerable extent on variables outside the village system. More important in this connection i the structure of the «ideal» hierarchy, primarily how it develops and asserts itself in the village. For this purpose, the constitution of he village community and village life should be investigated furthe.

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Chapter V.

The village scene

THE VILLAGE

The village, in its physical aspects, is fairly uniform over most of the South Kurdish area. The houses are built of mud, or rock in a mud mortar; the roofs are flat, held up by horizontal rafters — the most valuable item in the construction. Due to the nature of the architecture and the small size of available timber, the rooms of the houses tend to be quite small; pillars and posts are never used to support a longer span of roof. A second story on the building is rarely found. Frequently, there is no door with which to close the entrance, and never any glass in the windows. The windows are small and high up on the wall, the small room is always rather dark. There is no smoke-hole, the smoke from the fire on the hearth in the middle of the floor finds its way out through the entrance or the windows. The rooms are utterly devoid of furniture — the only contents of the room to which a visitor is shown is a tea samovar and some small glasses placed on an in-set shelf, and a roll of small rugs, mostly of felt, which are spread out on the floor to be sat on.

The number of rooms to a house varies, but is never very great, and must of course give accomodation to donkeys, cattle, and perhaps a horse, as well as to the people. To each house belongs a small courtyard, enclosed by a low wall. In winter, the house gives only

342 partial protection from the icy gales that sweep down from the Zagros mountains. In the warm weather, the family moves out on the flat rooftop after sundown, primarily to benefit from the cool breeze off the mountains.

361 Wherever a hill is available — which means nearly everywhere in Kurdish territory — the village is placed on a steep slope. That way, the flat rooftop of one house forms a kind of front terrace for the house above it in the hill, and the families tend to use the roof of the house below them for their own purposes, and so on down the line. As indicated by this, the village forms a very compact unit — maybe originally for defence purposes; certainly in part to save trouble by making double use of all walls and partitions in house construction. Frequently, the village is placed in the slope below a cool spring; only in the low country does it depend on wells for water. A common feature is a small pool, fed directly from the spring and protected from pollution by a low stone wall. Around the pool stand tall, shady trees, from which no branch must be broken, and in it one frequently finds large fish, fed by the villagers, which similarly must not be molested. The pool serves as a place for ritual washing and a favorite place of prayer.

621 Although considerable respect is shown for the sanctity of the home, many household activities must necessarily become public, especially in the half-year when they center around the rooftops. A certain everyday pattern of community life thus emerges in the cool of the evening. It requires much cooperation and bustle to direct the returning animals to their respective homes in the evening, with shouting and chasing of stray goats over rooftops and along partitions, away from the grainbins and waterskins and infants. Later, each family gathers around the evening meal, and then there is visiting back and forth, news being swapped, a glow in the dark from the fires where the tea is brewing, and a steady murmur of conversation. All through the night, the clamor and activity continues, with braying donkeys, crying babies, dogs chasing cats, cows shifting and groaning.

Though the patterns of each village differ, and any one of them may appear to be only utter confusion, there are, of course, regulari-

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ties that may be discerned. The village, in all its confusion, sets the scene on which the competing factions act out their parts; over faintly glowing fires of cowdung individuals are discussed and appraised in terms of the ideals expressed in the above outlined scales; control is attempted and leadership emerges. All these activities take place at more or less standardized occasions — and it is these occasions that will be described in the present chapter. In effect, any type of community or group activity gives an opportunity for status and competition to express itself, and a description of these occasions thus becomes virtually a description of community life.

INFORMAL GROUP FORMATION

Claudius James Rich, visiting Suleimani in the 1820's, was surprised at the regularities of the patterns of visiting, at the large groups that would congregate in the house of some «noblemen» or in the open, and spend their time smoking and drinking tea, while talking way into the small hours (Rich, op. cit.). This pattern is also found strongly developed in Suleimani today.

In the village, the farmer must of course keep rather different hours, and he invariably rises with the sun; but the same pattern is discernable. In the summer nights, visitors may be received on the rooftops; in the daytime, or when the weather is colder, any important visitor is showed to a special room, and a more or less standard group will quickly congregate. In the hot weather, other kinds of groups will congregate during the day in any bit of shade — under the trees by the pool, or on the roof-tops that are shaded by trees. These informal groups seem essentially of two types, one the group of village leaders in «the smokefilled room» to borrow an idiom from American politics, the other a less clearly defined «rooftop society» of persons of lower status.

«The smokefilled room». In the traditional tribal system, the *Agha* of the village should keep a *guesthouse*, in which the heads of families, all kinsmen of the *Agha*, and any visitor have a right to sit. In the area around Rowanduz, this seems to be an institution of

514 considerable economic importance, and a source of much prestige for
554 the hospitable *Agha* (Leach op. cit., pp. 28—33).

The practice in South Kurdish area differs somewhat from this ideal — it would be a very important man who went to the expence of keeping an «open house» in a special room; men of such importance and means are no longer found as residents in the villages. The typical *Agha* among the Hamawands will receive visitors in a small room, kept clean and reasonably empty for the purpose; the hospitality extended to the visitor is out of all proportion to the means of the host, but is not normally extended to all persons who would have a «right» to sit in the guesthouse. Similarly, from being the common center of the village, to which *all* the important men repair, it has become in fact the center of only a faction in the village, though admittedly the most important one. This development is of course carried further in the non-tribal villages, where every man of any importance attempts to utilize a certain room as «guesthouse», playing the role of host and senior member among the individuals who normally congregate there.

574 No matter what time of day a visitor arrives, he should at least
576 be served tea. There is a formal pattern of etiquette attached to
564 this, which unfortunately for the visitor who tries to be polite varies
272] between different areas — some places, one is expected to leave after the third glass, other places they insist that the only polite thing is to drink seven or even eleven glasses in a sitting. The act of distributing of the tea gives an opportunity to express the prestige scale by the sequence in which people are served; also, in the presence of a visitor, everyone is careful to use the proper honorific titles to
276] one another. All the time, cigarettes of dry Kurdish tobacco are smoked, the men crowd together in the half darkness and argue agitatedly, the fire smolders and smokes, and the atmosphere quickly becomes extremely heavy.

621 The persons assembling normally in «the smokefilled room»[1] are
554 the policy makers of the village or a main faction of it. In this forum, all matters of common interest ase discussed, the actions of the various members of the group coordinated, and opinions and plans crystallized. Within the group, of course, relative prestige is

[1] 104 of the Agha's guest house. — Analyst]

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constantly measured, and rivalry between members is directed towards out-doing each other in the eyes of the group as a whole. 621 554

«*Rooftop society*». An other imediately apparent type of informal group which is constantly formed is that of rooftop society. The smokefilled room houses a more polite and essentially closed society; rooftop society includes more diverse persons, and emerges from practically any aggregation of individuals who are not engaged in productive pursuits. There is a tendency for the individuals of the highest prestige to stay away from such groups, since the joking and horse-play may be rather personal and quite free, and the rules of «proper» behavior easily forgotten. Thus, though formed from an open aggregation of individuals, which any male transient as well as villager may join, it developes in practice into a gang of village youths and men, primarily the younger and more irresponsible, and the men of lower class status.

The same problems that are debated in the «smokefilled room» may also be discussed here, but with less stress on policy forming and more stress on the anecdotal. Prestige differences in the group emerge very clearly from who is made fun of and who feels in a position to mediate. At the same time, the group serves as a forum for complaints against abuses. Here the attitudes of the less privileged sections of the village to specific issues become coordinated; pressures are applied and excitement created that may lead to concerted action where persons feel they have been badly wronged.

Women's groups. Women are excluded from both these types of groups, as well as from «political» activities in general. Though they prepare the food that may be consumed in the «smokefilled room», they should not show themselves there, and, for example, tea-brewing, which should be done on the spot, is in the hands of a younger male kinsman of the host. In fact, when a visitor arrives in whom they take an interest, they may find domestic work to do within earshot though out of sight, or a small son of the house is slipped in as informant. The actual extent to which women contribute in shaping the opinions of their men is difficult to evaluate, and surely varies tremendously, but is usually probably slight. On the other hand, they have access to information, especially gossip, 562 573 [272]

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which the head of the family has not, and may thus be of some importance. The main aggregations of women where such gossip is exchanged are found around the water-hole, where water for the house is fetched, and clothes washed and beaten. The actual visiting between women seems predominantly to be limited by kinship, most frequent are the daughter's visits to her mother. Such visiting is concentrated in the hours just before noon, when the men are occupied and there are no pressing household duties.

In everyday life, there are thus three types of larger groupings that provide a forum for factionalism and leadership: (a) the men of high prestige congregate in «the smoke-filled room», (b) the men of less prestige get together in an informal «rooftop society», and (c) the women of the community meet and gossip by the village water-hole. None of these groupings, however, pretend to be representative of the community as a whole, and none of them are primarily integrative in their function.

RITUAL UNITY OF THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY

Mosque. The complete status hierarchy of individuals in the village only emerges clearly, and the effective integration of the community is only achieved, through the truly communal village activities. These will tend to be of a more formal and ritual type, and are more or less closely related to religion. In the villages in which a mosque is found, the most obvious occasion is the Friday sermon. However, the position of the mullah varies considerably, as indicated above; and many village mullahs find it difficult to make the occasion truly communal, to induce their villagers to attend sermons at the mosque — «they come home from the fields very tired, and would rather sit at home». Where a mullah of high prestige is found, he will manage to collect a considerable fraction of the village around him on such occasions, and by religious teaching raise the standard of the population, as measured on the scale of learning and piety. This in turn reflects on the village as a whole, the pressure to attend Friday sermons increases, and a unity and

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intensity of village loyalty is produced that is rarely found in other tenant villages.

Ritual homage. Whereas many villages lack the central focus of a mosque, religious activities still have considerable integrative functions, especially the standardized prayers, or, more properly, the ritual homage paid to Allah five times daily, facing Mecca, as the Prophet Mohammed commanded. This homage being of a standardized type and involving a stereotyped series of postures, supposedly performed simultaneously by all the villagers, it symbolizes a solidarity and *gemeinschaft* that must be re-inforced, shall the community persist. The personal prayer occasionally appended is unimportant; the emphasis is on the common ritual.

The time for prayer is specified in relation to sunrise and sundown, e. g. one two hours preceding, another one and a half hours after sundown. Since no clocks or watches are commonly available in the village, «calling to prayer» gives opportunity for controlling behavior in the religious field, and thus for the emergence of a type of leadership. Where a mullah is present, he naturally performs the function; where there is no mullah, the local derwish or head of the local derwishes tries to assume this responsibility. His melodious chant certainly thrills a Western ear in the quiet evening; but the call is not necessarily responded to very quickly; furthermore, *Hadji* and other important persons will tend to take an autonomous view of the proper time for prayers. Thus, unless a mullah of some importance is present, the degree of *leadership* implied in calling to prayer is rather slight. However, this fact would not seem to detract significantly from the integrative symbolism of the simultaneous ritual homage to God.

Communal magic. The only cases of communal magic which I became aware of are concerned with the most critical and unpredictable question in Kurdish subsistence: rain. The other examples of magic are of different type: The ordinary derwish antics, performed in public, are not instrumental in the sense that they are directed towards achieving some practical and generally canonal end; the magic connected with amulets for protection etc. are of a personal and private kind. The art of rainmaking, on the other hand, is still

practised as a communal rite in cases of need, and gives the competent dervish an opportunity to reinforce his special position and demonstrate his control of power.

The actual rite is in rough outline quite simple. After an all-night session of prayer and purification on the part of the dervish, he is taken to a pool in the near-by, dwindling stream, and submerged in the water.

It is difficult to say just what degree of emotional intensity is involved in the rite so far as a majority of the participants is concerned. In the special case in question, they did not seem particularly impressed — the dervish involved was one who was frequently the object of mild horseplay, and the actual act of ducking him might have some appeal to the less serious minded. However this may be, the gravity of drought should not be underestimated, and would hardly be conducive to horseplay. The winter rains seemed to have stopped much too early, and the rite was a response to this serious situation. Considering this, the performance was probably more emotionally charged than some of the superficial comments might suggest, and certainly served to emphasize the unity and solidarity of the group. — It might incidentally be noted that this specific rite also was successful, in that fairly heavy rains followed shortly.

Thus, this ritual of rainmaking is concerned with a very critical communal problem, and enables the dervish to assume a momentary position of dominant importance in his community. An interesting deviation from the stated norm was also observed in this case: the young son of the village Agha was submerged alongside with the dervish[1]). This equivalence may be significant in several respects. From the point of view of the dervish, it indicates the considerable extent of his momentary prestige — from a normal status of labourer he is elevated to temporary equivalence with the heir apparent of the village Agha. It may also illustrate something in the Kurdish conception of power: there is no really clear distinction made between the

[1]) The fact that the son rather than the Agha himself was chosen is best understood in terms of the slightly undignified situation, and the rather undignified appearance of the actor following immersion.

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sacred powers of the dervish and the practical powers of the political leader; both are equally potent in the ritual situation, and their character may be covered best by the concept of personal charisma.

THE FEAST

The feast occupies a very prominent place in the communal life of the village, and is regarded as an active agent in producing solidarity and unity, as well as being a symbol of such unity. The fact of eating together in itself produces certain mutual obligations and solemnizes feelings of sympathy. The Bedouin ideal, that any person with whom you have eaten is inviolable for a minimum period of time, is not actually applied in Kurdish territory, but is well known and approved of as being highly ethical. Essentially similar, though less formal, obligations are implied in the Kurdish concept of sharing the bread.

Furthermore, the feast is a forum for conspicuous consumption, and thus gives the host an opportunity to display his wealth, and to create and re-affirm ties of friendship by generosity. Thus the person who gives the feast can enhance his prestige in the village considerably; hospitality is an integral aspect of the Kurdish ideal of a man, conversely, a person with a reputation for miserliness suffers corresponding loss of prestige.

A feast in one form or another is thus a fairly frequent occurrence in the village. Since it will involve at least a major part and usually the whole of the village, it provides one of the major occasions in which leadership and moderate rivalry is expressed, and in which the relative prestige and resultant total status positions become systematized. Essentially, these feasts are of two major types, (1) connected with religious festivals, or (2) marking transitions of status in the life cycle of members of the society.

Religious festivals. In some villages, the whole of the holy month of Ramadan is celebrated by regular communal evening meals at the mosque or in the village square. In this arrangement, either each household may in turn serve as hosts for the whole village, or each family brings its own food. Only the men partake in the meal; for them, it becomes a social occasion of major importance. The feast

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take place after sundown, since there should be a fast observed during the day in Ramadan month — as a matter of fact, this fast is observed by very few. However, this degree of Ramadan celebration is not usual. The last three days of that month, on the other hand, are universally regarded as holidays, and serve as formal occasion for forgiving enemies, affirming village loyalties, and reinforcing ties of friendship.

Ramadan is defined in terms of a year of lunar months, and thus falls some days earlier in relation to the seasons for every year. At the time of the present fieldwork, the end of Ramadan coincided roughly with the completion of the harvest; it is difficult to say which aspects of the proceedings were connected with the one, as distinct from the other event. The celebration on the main, first day consisted of four major phases: (1) religious service (2) formal communal meal (3) payment of tax to the mosque (4) informal social celebrations.

The religious service was led by the son of the mullah of the neighboring village, since the village in which I was staying at the time had no mullah of its own. It was held in the house of the *Hadji*, the actual leader and *kikha* of the village. The local derwish, reacting to the presence of only an un-ordained officiator, tried to assert himself by interjecting loud and pious exclamations, but was soon quieted down as the mullah's son speeded on through the text.

After the ritual followed the communal meal, supplied by the *Hadji*, and his prestige profited by a subtle balance between the conspicuous exhibition of plenty tempered with a pious avoidance of over-indulgence. Two of the lower-class laborers, who had been fighting and feeling out of place, took the opportunity to busy themselves by serving the tea; but the *Hadji* insisted upon their status as guests, and they were quickly relieved by a young son, whom he called in for the purpose. Before the meal, hands were kissed (with a tendency towards reciprocity only between social equals or very close kin), misunderstandings forgotten and grudges forgiven. After the meal, some small boys appeared and kissed the hands of all the men present.

This being completed, the heads of village households each pledged

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a tax of three kg. of grain to the mosque for each household member. This is done by each of the men in turn seating himself before the mullah, with a symbolic tray of grain between them. The men follow one another in a descending order of prestige, involving public acceptance and confirmation of the actual hierarchy of individuals in the village. At one or two points there was some hesitation, and very elusive momentary pressures were brought to bear by the group on the actors to assure the «right» sequence. This occasion also gave the *Hadji* an opportunity to affirm his leading position in the village by pledging 3.5 kg. pr. person to the mosque, and with a grand gesture paying for a poor widow in the village, not represented by any male, as well as for my interpreter, who, not being of the village, did not dispose of any grain.

At the completion of this, the group dispersed. Later in the day, the landowner appeared, and people also from the neighboring villages drifted in in informal groups and congregated in a large circle in the courtyard of the house in which he was staying. For the remaining period, celebrations involved only smaller, informal groups and individual visiting.

— I have chosen to describe this occasion in some detail, since it was observed under favorable conditions and illustrates the situation in which the hierarchy of individuals in the village is expressed, and how the individual's rating of himself is confirmed or contradicted by the group. Other religious festivals serve an essentially similar function, though they may in part be more amenable to manipulation and «social climbing». For example, two months ten days after Ramadan follows *Qorbani*, the feast of sacrifice, lasting four days, and centering around the killing of a large animal — sheep or preferably cow. Any person may volunteer to do Qorbani, and offer his cow up — though there are probably informal controls on who may in fact presume to that extent. *Mauled*, Mohammed's birthday, is similarly celebrated by a semi-communal feast and conspicuous consumption; the various other holidays are of a more private kind.

Rites de passage. The various rites marking transitions in the status position of individuals through their life cycle are less formally controlled. They are communal in a different sense from the ritual-

§41 religious festivals; though such transitions are of importance to the group as a whole, they concern one family more than other families in the village. There are no age-grades or similar organizations, and the celebrations thus remain more of a family affair. The scale of the celebrations is then determined by the means of the family, and the event is simply one more opportunity for conspicuous consumption and for re-affirming friendship ties. The celebrations and rites are concerned with birth and naming, circumcision, teething, tattooing, marriage, and death. Rites marking puberty are lacking. — Since it serves no purpose in the present context to describe the various rites in any detail, the following discussion will deal only with some more general aspects of the proceedings.

§49 Before the birth of the child, the parents, to the extent they can afford it, prepare clothes for it. During labor, neighboring women or a kind of specialist midwife may assist. The placenta is secretly buried. Certain precautions connected with the newborn infant are interesting, in that they emphasize the importance attached to sons, and the woman's fear of being barren: When a boy is born, the relatives guard him day and night for seven days, and may further protect him by laying a knife, large needle, or unsmoked hashish by his crib. This is so that the *shaw*, a form of *djinn* or supernatural being, will not be able to harm him. The shaw is said to be an old childless woman who becomes envious to see a child born. The shaw is not so interested in girl children, so there is no need to guard a girl baby, though a knife or onion-leaf may be placed beside her.

§53 On the seventh or thirteenth day after birth, relatives and friends are called in, and a mullah is asked to officiate at the naming ceremony. On this occasion, the throat of a sheep is cut and a feast is given, if the parents can so afford.

§52 Circumcision of boys is done any time before the age of puberty, and is usually performed simultaneously on a large number of boys. Islamic doctrine stipulates that it should never be done on less than three boys at a time — if there are only two boys present, it may in fact still be done, the neck of a rooster being cut off to substitute for the third boy. The officiator is a barber from some larger town, usually Sulaimani. It is customary on this occasion for the village

192

Hamma, an old Kurdish woman.

Sheikh Mahmud.

Dervish Hamma.

[opposite p. 112 -- daylight]

152 leader, if he has a son who is being circumcised, to pay for the sons of poor people, and to give the feast. There is thus a tendency for the headman's sons to be circumcised in a common ritual with a large number of boys. This might be thought of as reminiscent of some form of age-grades, and may be vaguely symbolic of loyalty ties within such generations of village boys.

When a child loses his first *deciduous tooth*, a special dish is commonly prepared and given to the neighbors «because the parents are very proud that their child has become so big».

302 When a girl feels she is growing up, she may, with a few friends,
303 decide she wishes to be *tattooed*, usually only moderate small designs on face or hands. This is performed by an old woman specialist rarely a resident of the village, but is, everyone insisted, now going out of use as a practice. There is no formal rule as to the age at which this is done, but a girl presuming at too early and age would probably be ridiculed. The controls seem essentially the the same as those on the use of cosmetics in Western society, and the time of tattooing does not correspond to puberty in any one-to-one relation as a rite de passage.

575 *Marriage* is one of the most exciting festivals of the village, and usually takes place in the autumn after the harvest, to ensure plentiful supplies. The process of choosing a spouse has been discussed above (pp. 26 ff.) — the ceremony itself is most colorful in the case of marriages that connect two villages, since then the aspect of conspicuous exhibition of wealth is most stressed, and the bridal procession from the girl's to the husband's home most impressive. The celebrations should traditionally last three days, and involve all one would expect of eating, smoking, and dancing, offering opportunities for all kinds of informal social activities. Unless excessive factionalism interferes, the whole village takes part in the festivities.

745 *Death.* After a death, the members of the bereaved household remain at home for three days, and friends and relations come visiting, express their sympathy, and are served food and tea. After three days, the throats of two or three sheep are cut, in honor of the deceased, and the meat is «given to the poor» — that is, distributed

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765 in the village as a whole[1]). Any conspicuous excesses in celebration are however tempered by pious ideals of moderation.

574 551 621 576 To summarize: the *feast*, in its various religious and personal applications, offers a forum for competition and rivalry between persons, especially in the field of wealth, but this aspect is somewhat tempered by ideals of moderation and control inherent in the other scales by which individuals are evaluated. Furthermore, these communal or semi-communal occasions formalize the relative prestige positions of individuals, as seen by other individuals, and by the group as a whole. These prestige hierarchies find expression especially in situations where a regular order of serving or acting is observed. When all the tea comes out of the host's one samovar, individuals must necessarily be served in a sequence. In Kurdish culture, as in most other cultures, the *first* position in a sequence, and in fact precedence in general, is regarded as symbolic of status. These occasions thus necessarily come to express a status hierarchy, and that in a familiar context where the symbolism is clear and rivalry for relative places conscious. In seating, in serving, and in any sequence of appearance, this rule is followed. In the fluid type of hierarchy found in the Kurdish villages, where status positions are not crystallized in a formal structure, but are constantly being re-evaluated in terms, in the final instance, of the common denominator of *power*, it is essential that some mechanism is found whereby relative status and power can be compared and made public by non-violent means. Characteristically, practically all the major communal occasions in the villages of Southern Kurdistan involve several instances where this hierarchy can become expressed.

RAIDING AND WARFARE

721 701 The final and most spectacular occasion for the emergence of leadership and the expression of a status hierarchy is offered by the

[1]) This ritual slaughter of animals has a general significance as a sign of respect — when an important visitor arrives, the throat of a sheep is cut just before the visitor approaches, so that the blood may flow across the road just as he passes over.

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situation of armed conflict. The conceptual separation of peace chief and war chief, frequently found in other societies, is lacking in the Kurdish area; thus the leader in war is also the leader in peace, and differences in total status organize the men of a local community in a single, universally relevant hierarchy of individuals. The pertinent questions in the present connection regarding armed conflict are then concerned with who initiates it, and what the extent and nature of his following is. 721 701

At present, of course, external administration prevents large scale conflicts of any kind, and this kind of leadership is rarely expressed, and then only in a limited field. In the autonomous Kurdish system, on the other hand, conflicts of all kinds were endemic, and the following discussion relates primarily to the patterns as freely expressed up till the nineteen twenties.

In the tribal political systems, political office directly involved leadership in war, and each *Agha* and *Raiz* in the hierarchy was responsible for mustering, and vested with the command of, a specified number of rifle-men. The same correspondence between civil and military command was characteristic of the feudal organizations of the non-tribal areas, and e. g. of the temporary organization established by Shaikh Mahmud.

The *Aghas* of villages could also independently initiate war parties — a development carried to the extreme in the case of the Hamawands. Such war or raiding parties also served as steppingstones for political advancement — the Hamawand who conquered a village would sooner or later break loose from the *Agha* that backed him, and constitute himself as an *Agha* on his own right. In the non-tribal areas, this was more easily done, and the successful warleader might carve out a small domain for himself. In the tribal system, the raiding parties directed towards the conquest of land were generally composed of near kin, who were, in fact, relieving local village population pressure and looking for a new place to settle down. The feudal lord, on the other hand, recruited his soldiers where he could, though there was a conscious attempt, as pointed out in the discussion of *Baban* organization to utilize tribal solidarity and use smaller groups of tribesmen to control larger groups of non-tribal peasants. Thus,

721 701 leadership in war parties, and resultant conquest, was a major path of status mobility.

Raiding parties, not aimed at conquest, but merely at the looting of caravans or bazaars, tended to be more open in composition. Competent riflemen-adventurers from various villages would congregate under the command of some «brigand leader» in the terminology of the external administration, and follow him as long as his luck lasted. Characteristically enough, the Hamawands form an exception to this usual pattern. Adapting their whole society to an economy based on war and looting, they also developed a singular form of professional ethics connected with these activities. Not only were even the incidental raiding parties apparently organized in the same pattern as village administration; rules of fair play were also developed. According to the accounts of their opponents as well as their own lore, women were never harmed or even searched in the raids on caravans — if you were able to slip your money-bag to a woman without the Hamawands noticing it, your money was safe — if the woman was honest! Moreover, if the hour for prayer found them in the middle of battle, they would each in turn get off their horse and go through the complete ritual, after which they would again charge into the turmoil!

701 594 The ordinary brigand, apart from this Hamawand development, qualified himself in the eyes of the villagers by a high rating on the scale of honor and bravery, as well as a fairly consistent run of good luck. In spite of persistent efforts on the part of the external administration, brigandage and raiding continues — though on a greatly reduced scale — and this must primarily be due to the positive value given to this type of bravery. The ideal which the brigand should approach is closely similar to our conception of Robin Hood. At the time of my visit, a certain bandit and murderer by the name Kulla Piza was active in the area. For all practical purposes he seemed to regard himself as involved in a blood feud with the police — and the stories circulating about him had a familiar Robin Hood ring. They involved stealing from the rich and giving to the poor, miraculous feats such as visiting the police inspector's home and forcing him to serve up a luxurious dinner, being gallant to the ladies, etc. etc.

7: Barth E-5 (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

A person exhibiting similar virtues to a lesser degree will naturally tend to lead the local «rooftop society» of his own village, and is the type of person who frequently makes his career as the retainer of a feudal lord, thereby attaining elusive but probably considerable powers. 701 554

An occasional legitimate expression for this type of leadership today is the «posse», organized on a village level e. g. when cattle is stolen, on a larger scale when cooperating with the police in tracking a brigand. It should be noted, incidentally, that such assistance on the part of a whole district or tribe is only extended to the police when the outlaw has made himself obnoxious to the villagers of the area in question. 628

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Chapter VI

Integration of part-statuses

621 554 Such then is the «scene» on which most social activities take place, and where control and organization emerges. This organization however, as has repeatedly been pointed out, is one of supra- and subordination of individuals, and not a formal hierarchy of offices, divorced from the persons filling them. The actual position of the individual thus derives from all of his part-statuses, from his prestige, as derived from his rating on the suggested scales, and from his ability to exploit the possibilities offered by these factors and by chance occasions.

The integration of all these analytically separable factors into a final position in the local group hierarchy poses a problem, and in this problem the familiar anthropoligical techniques and concepts can offer little help. In a traditional system, where individuals are permitted to make political demands on their followers, not by virtue of being vested with an abstract office, but as *individuals* by virtue of their higher status, there must be a single, unitary hierarchy of individuals. In Kurdish society, status is derived from a number of separate and in part mutually exclusive hierarchies and contexts; these elements of status, or part-statuses, must needs be added up somehow — some common denominator must exist by which the elements are given relative values. This common denominator is locally spoken of, and it has seemed analytically convenient to regard it as, a wide concept of *power*. But it is fruitless to attempt to con-

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struct a formula for the addition of these part-statuses. Their relative weights are revealed only in very few contexts of real life, since such a tremendous number of variables combine in the relations between any two individuals. 621 554

At least in certain situations, some qualifications to leadership take precedence over others, and impediments in one field can be overcome or outweighed by advantages in other fields. With respect to the part-status positions, some of these seem to be mutually incompatible, in that they can not easily be occupied by the same individual; others are mutually exclusive to the extent of not coexisting in the same local community. Finally, there are conflicts of loyalties: which units of reference take precedence over others in a situation of choice.

The culture of the Kurdish villager is not an integrated culture, in the sense that there are no discrepancies and conflicts between norms. Various rules and values may in certain situations come into clear opposition. Though for some such conflicts, standardized solutions or circumlocutions have been developed, this is most clearly not true of all. Such unresolved problems are the fields where change and adaptation take place. But by virtue of the lack of consistent logic and a minimum of agreement, these are fields that can not readily be described, much less analysed, by the anthropologist. The following section contains a discussion, based on my own and some secondary material, of some of the more crude and obvious aspects of this situation. All I can attempt to do is demonstrate a few clearer cases of precedence and incompatibility, and suggest certain systematic distinctions between questions of (a) impediments to leadership, (b) general incompatibility of part-statuses, and (c) precedence of loyalties to alternative groups and identifications.

IMPEDIMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS TO LEADERSHIP

The order of importance of the various qualifications to high positions are most clearly revealed in the emergence of formally recognized leadership. In certain situations, impediments to leadership may be overcome by the posession of other qualifications that take precedence. Since autonomous Kurdish institutions are only partially 622

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functioning in these fields, the data is incomplete; moreover, the relative importance of various qualifications seem to differ somewhat between the infra-village and supra-village levels, and between the tribal and feudal organizations.

The impediment of female sex. The clearest case, illustrating the type of problem I am concerned with, relates to the position of the *woman* who, except for her sex, fulfills all the requirements of a leader. I have previously stated that the woman plays no active part in political life in the widest sense. On the village level, that seems to be invariably true. But on the supra-village level, there are some exceptions. The problem, in the Kurdish system, amounts to what should take precedence, the impediment of female sex, or the qualifications of high family status, wealth, etc. In the village, the differences in family status and wealth are not great enough to counterbalance an obverse difference in sex; among the leading families of Southern Kurdistan, these differences in status and wealth as compared to the general population become great enough to override the impediment of female sex, and in several cases women have emerged as leaders of considerable consequence.

The most spectatcular case was that of *Adela Khanem*, leader of the Jaf confederacy around the time of the First World War. She belonged to the ruling lineage of Ardalan princes in the southern provinces of Persian Kurdistan, and married Osman Pasha, the leader of the sedentary section of the Jaf. To him, she was of assistance in administration etc., and upon his death she retained or assumed the position as leader of the Jaf *Begzada*. Soane (op. cit.) after his visit with her before Osman Pasha's death, speaks very highly of her, both as a person and as a ruler. In 1919, she is described as «. . . about 60 years of age, but, thanks to the skillful, though liberal, use of artificial aids, she did not look a day over 40». (Lees, 1928, p. 257). In the conflicts following the war, she pursued an independent policy of cooperation with the British and opposition to Shaikh Mahmud.

A contemporary example is *Hafsakhan*, cousin and sister-in-law of Shaikh Mahmud. As a young girl, in the critical period of Shaikh Mahmud's rebellion, she assumed the responsibility for a handful of imprisoned British officers, in order to protect them from Kurdish

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irregulars. The just treatment extended to these prisoners was later the official British grounds for commuting Shaikh Mahmud's death sentence to life-long exile (later commuted further). 562 554

Hafsakhan has since retained a prominent position in Suleimani, and today receives visitors of both sexes in her own gardens, independent of her husband, Shaikh Kader. A small, darkhaired, attractive woman, she shows a social grace and intelligence that fully justifies her reputation.

Women who are active in the political field remain the exceptions, however, even among the most prominent families. It would seem that in addition to exceptional ability as well as interest — and the latter is probably fairly rare too — somewhat unusual circumstances are required to give a woman the opportunity to enter publicly into political life. Adela Khanem did so as the trusted representative and later widow of Osman Pasha, and surely gained popularity in Ottoman times from her Persian origin; Hafsakhan showed wise resolution in a situation for which there was no clear precedence. But the mere fact that such women are found at all in Moslem Kurdistan indicates the very great prestige attached to their other qualifications, primarily the fact of membership in the prominent families to which they belong.

The impediment of low birth. A second impediment to leadership is that of low birth, or, in the tribal system, descent from a non-lineage member. This, just as female sex, does not seem ever to be an absolute impediment that can not be out-weighed by qualifications in other fields. Status in Kurdish society is certainly in part inherited, and descent from prominent persons is a contributary qualification to leadership, but does not seem in any political context to be an absolute *requirement*. 565 622 554

Before external administration «froze» the formerly fluid feudal hierarchies of Southern Kurdistan, there were constant changes in personnel and organization of territories. Political power was roughly related to land ownership — obviously, since land was passed on in family lines, political hierarchies may be spoken of in terms of «dynasties». But there were only practical, no fundamental, difficulties preventing a laborer's son from working his way up

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565 through a feudal hierarchy, and eventually be rewarded with a
622 feudal fief, or alternatively to become a leader of a war party large
554 enough to conquer a domain. Both these paths of upward mobility were in fact in constant use, and the problem facing the ambitious youth was simply that of how best to become qualified, in terms of wealth and prestige, to assume leadership. This wealth and prestige could be achieved through luck in small raids, bravery and self-assertion, ability to handle people, wide extension of ties of friendship, and the impediment of low birth could thus be out-weighed.

There is, however, an aristocratic undertone to much Kurdish political thinking, and especially members of the highest leading families of the area are ascribed charisma by virtue of their descent, on the same pattern as are the descendants of the Prophet. Thus, what is passed on in the families of high status is more than mere wealth; and the fact of low birth, quite apart from its disadvantage in terms of initial poverty, would create considerable difficulty if the person were pretending for the very highest status positions. This aspect is clearly expressed in several traditional accounts from Baban times, where the brave hero of modest birth in the critical moment, when he could have achieved the highest position, «knows his place» and is later rewarded by the Baban Pasha. (E. g. a story of Salim Beg, who was offered the position as ruler of Southern Kurdistan by the Persian Nadir Shah). But the Baban family itself is said to be descended from Fakka Hamma Derishman, who owned no more than one small village in Pushdir.

In the tribal system, there enters the additional factor that descent from the apical ancestor of the lineage is a theoretical prerequisite for membership in the group, and thus for political power in it. Even this basic principle of organization can be circumvented, however, if a person appears who by high status or de-facto power can control the group.

An obvious example is the Jaf confederacy, where the *Begzada* do not claim common descent with all the *tiras* in the confederacy, but none the less occupy a position of unquestioned authority. Other examples are found in the recent history of the Hamawands, who for a while followed the Jaf *Begzada*, later the Berezinje Shaikhs at

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the time of Shaikh Said and Shaikh Mahmud. Thus, while no one who is not a member of the lineage can achieve a position *within* the segmentary lineage system, the lineage group as a whole, or even a section of it, temporarily broken away from the remainder of the descent group, can join a larger confederacy under a «foreign» leader.

In summary, one might say that there are no *absolute* impediments, or, inversely, necessary requirements, relating to leadership in any of the Southern Kurdish political systems; that persons theoretically may qualify for leadership by any combination of part-statuses, so long as they add up to a total status position sufficiently exhalted to correspond to, or «justify», the political and other demands involved in leading the group in question.

INCOMPATIBILITY OF PART-STATUSES

Clearly, only ascribed status positions, based on sex and birth, could function as true impediments to leadership. Various achieved status positions may be incompatible with high political positions, but since such status positions can be changed, they are at most temporary impediments, and can better be discussed under the present heading.

Most of these incompatibilities have been suggested above. Of the part-statuses in the religious field, the *mullah* will tend to be rather separated from the general village commuity — he is frequently a tenant-farmer, but rarely occupies any other part-status position, with the occasional exception of *Hadji*. Membership in a *derwish* brotherhood is clearly a badge of low class, and the derwish will not occupy any of the higher status positions. Conversely, the title of *Hadji* is a badge of high status, and is combined with any of the higher part-status positions, including that of the mullah. A *woman* can not be a mullah.

The hierarchy of class, as implied in the discussion, seems to divide the local community into separable categories that do not significantly overlap in terms of prestige or general position in the village and supra-village hierarchy.

563 In summary, the following diagram (No. 9) suggests the relative
621 positions of various social categories in the village hierarchy, and
554 their approximate spread on an ordinate of ‹low-high› — obviously a very impressionistic diagram, for illustrative purposes only. Different part-statuses that do not overlap in their spread on the low-high

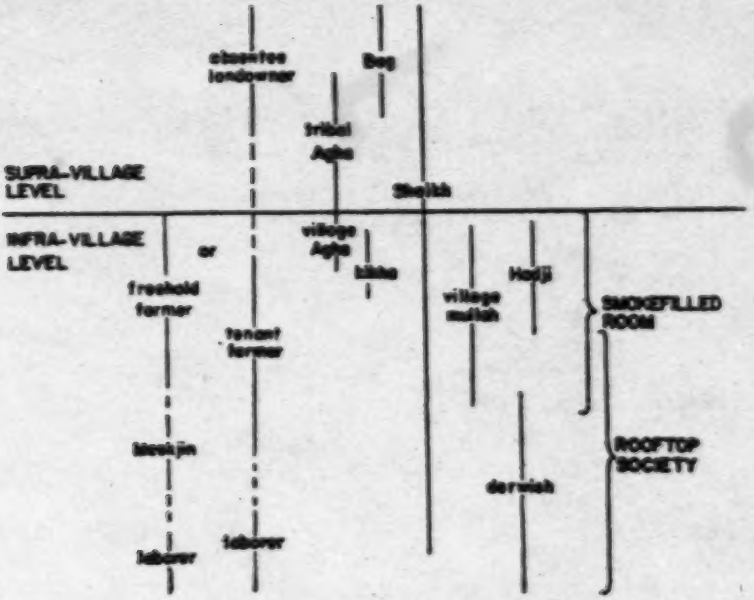

Diagram No. 9. Relative status of some social categories.

axis are incompatible; furthermore, the mullah often not being fully integrated in the community, there will be a lower frequency of combination of the status of mullah with the other, theoretically compatible, part-statuses.

PRECEDENCE IN LOYALTIES

571 In some conflict situations, any specific individual may be faced with a choice as to which group or person he should support — primarily the alternatives of lineage group vs. lord, lineage group

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vs. local community, and questions of kin loyalties and loyalty to 571
the person of the leader. This precedence in loyalties, that is, the relative degree of identification with various categories or groups, clearly demonstrates the fluidity of the Kurdish village hierarchy. The group or institution embodying the most power seems invariably to be adhered to, and loyalties shifted accordingly. This in no way means that the Kurdish villager may not be fired with idealism, and take to arms for such ideals or for individuals in the face of great odds. The generalization is concerned with a much more fundamental level. The usual anthropological model of society hypothecates a tendency to restore social equilibrium, and pictures social action as brought to bear on any disturbance so as to compensate for its effect and remove it. In the Kurdish system, this would not always seem to be the case. If a social relation breaks down, there is no systematic or communal effort to restore the former status quo. When the breakdown is within the village community, the factions involved will tend to avoid contacts, and struggle till a new balance is established, or till the smaller group or group in opposition breaks out, migrates or forms a new village. If the breakdown were between villages, social relations would be completely severed, feud or at least considerable talk of feud would ensue, smaller incidents might continue for a long period of time. Trade would take a different course, and new contacts be established.

A disturbance that causes a change in some factor thus leads to an adaptation of the whole system to the new situation. There seems, in the autonomous Kurdish system, to be no conception of the need for conserted communal action to restore a normatively or legally defined «right» state; in that sense, all persons with power are usurpers, on all levels. There are no unquestioned normative, much less supernatural sanctions defining rights and privileges; the situation is much more one of a *modus vivendi*, where every person is given an area of «free grace» in Max Weber's terms (cf. p. 50), in proportion to his power position in the village hierarchy. The rebellion or conflict results where either the subject individuals do not recognize or are suspicious of the actual status and powers of the superordinated person, or where the latter incites a person or group against

him by overstepping his «reasonable» area of free grace in his relation to them.

In thinking about social relations, this essentially involves substituting the word «reasonable» for «right» — the latter being rigid and absolute, the former being defined in terms of numerous considerations of the specific situation. Obviously, different individuals with different temperament, experience, and values will have various ideas of what is «reasonable» — consequently, any type of superordination that does not involve constant face-to-face relations with the subordinates must be an uneasy one — hence the importance of the bodyguard, even for the more minor Kurdish leaders.

In the case of conflicting loyalties, the specific situation in the village and area concerned decides which group identification takes precedence. This is clearly illustrated in choice between identification with, or loyalties to, the landlord, the lineage or kin group, and the village community. How completely considerations of power override general rules of loyalty is finally illustrated by conflicts within the family of the old Baban Pasha.

Lineage group vs. lord. In the Kurdish tribal system, genealogical and local groups coincide, and these groups are also the organizational units in a formal political sense. A somewhat similar correspondance is characteristic of the non-tribal tenant villages. Thus, since they coincide, the relative importance of the identification with the kin group and with the political unit, as personified by the political officeholder or lord, can not easily be determined. Only in the rather unusual cases where the two are different, do problems of identification and precedence arise.

An example of the relative powers of the landowner vs. the lineage leader is offered by the *Barzi Gawra* group, settled on the land of Shaikh Mahmud as tenant farmers. The Barzi Gawra are one of ten branches of the *Merwani tira*, the *Ratz* of which is Said Ali Khaiber of Sulaimani.

Formally, the position of the *Ratz* is quite similar to that in other *tira*, though more directly dependent on «democratic» approval. Succession is decided by a council of the important men of the ten villages. This council is limited by informal controls, being open to

any one of the *tira* who «feels important enough». The qualifications of the *Rais* are that he must be experienced, old, and rich (receiving no remuneration for his services), and in fact be acclaimed by a majority of his followers. His field of power, on the other hand, is minimal, and concerns only the relations between the various Memzi villages. Considering that these are spread over a large area, and that the *Rais* has no way of enforcing his decisions, he constitutes little more than a mediator in intra-tribal affairs. S 71 422

Two of the Memzi villages lie on the land of Shaikh Mahmood, and are as completely under his control as are his non-tribal tenants. Shaikh Mahmood freely appoints the village headman himself, and collects the normal shares in tax — according to one critical old woman of the village, he frequently takes considerably more out! In the rather inconceivable case of conflict between the *Rais*, with no formal powers, and Shaikh Mahmood, with the power to evict and fine the villagers, there is little doubt whose orders would be followed. The Shaikh even has the primary loyalties of many of the Berzi — the most succinct statement of the Kurd's attitude to his leader was made by the farmer-mullah of the village: «When Shaikh Mahmood was a religious leader, I was a mullah. He became King, I become a tribesman. Now he is a landowner, I am a farmer.» This does not leave very much to the *Rais*. 531

There is thus a contradiction between the feudal hierarchy of which Shaikh Mahmood is the head, based on considerations of locality and economic relations, and the genealogically defined tribal organization, relating these two villages to the other Memzi villages. This lineage organization is still retained, and headed by the *Rais*. But the extent of the *Rais*'s power is minimal, whereas the landowner's *de facto* power is necessarily considerable; the presence of these *de facto* powers has been fully recognized, and loyalties shifted accordingly. Because of the rigidity of the Kurdish lineage system, no modification of its form has been possible; the field in which it is relevant has simply been reduced.

In effect, this may also be seen as a situation of conflict between two *leaders*, each heading an organization. Since organizational hierarchies are in terms of individuals and not abstract offices, the

97f position of the leader becomes crucial. In the present case, the one leader clearly has more status and power than the other, and identification is with the leader with the higher status.

Within the tribal lineage groups, examples of such identification with *leaders* rather than genealogical groups in abstracto can be multiplied. In various conflicts, tribes will split and align in terms of contending leaders, disregarding the genealogical ties. The *Hamawands* after the First World War partly sided with Sheikh Mahmud, partly with the British; the same conflict found the leaders of the *Jaf* confederacy, the *Begzada*, divided into two factions, each with their following (Leon, op. cit). In the non-tribal areas, larger scale kin organizations are lacking, and such choices do not arise in the same way. In summary, it seems that in situations of choice, any actual organization, as personified in the leader, takes precedence over abstract genealogical alignments. Where also these genealogical alignments are systematized into an actual organization, a lineage, the choice seems to be made on the basis of a relative evaluation of the status and power of the two competing leaders.

Lineage group vs. village community. In certain situations, the lineage or kin group and the village do not coincide, and a conflict of loyalties may result. In such cases, the village community seems to take precedence. From the tribal system, the case of feud enumerated in Appendix II may serve as an example. The originator of the feud is genealogically more closely tied to the village of his victims than to that in which he is residing; yet, he can count on his village of residence for main support. In the archaeological excavations, where workmen from several villages were brought together, the various cleavages would follow community lines; and laborers, genealogically unconnected with the Hamawand landholding farmers who dominated the villages, would invariably side with the village in which they resided.

In the non-tribal, mosaic villages, kinship tends to set the factional patterns of alignment within the community; but in no case would it seem possible for kinship ties crossing village boundaries to override village identification in a situation of conflict. Where the two differ, the community factor takes precedence over the genealogical factor

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1955 NO.11 Kurd NO.11

in determining loyalties. This, it should be emphasized, is true of the[7] village, but does not apply to the absentee landowner class, who, in an urban or semi-urban setting and with widely dispersed property, have nothing corresponding to the unequivocal community membership of a villager.

This primary identification with the village community is utilized for integrative purposes in the non-tribal tenant villages, where kinship-patterned factionalism would otherwise be rabid. It is a very characteristic pattern, noticed by numerous travellers, that every Kurdish village has one or more special «enemy» villages, towards which considerable hostility is expressed — quite out of proportion to the actual grievances between the two communities. The tenant villages lie in the zone where external administration is most completely established, and consequently village unity, for defence or other purposes, is rarely called for. This standardized hostility towards an «opposing» community undoubtedly serves as a mechanism to mobilize the primary village identification, and thus overrule or limit kin group factionalism.

Close kin loyalties. Identification and loyalty would thus seem to follow the patterns of power distribution fairly closely, and be adapted or transferred when changes in the power distribution require. This follows from the general elements of fluidity and adaptability in the whole village structure. Rigid and absolute identification and loyalty to abstract categories could not fit such a fluid system; identification must be with an actual, existing organization of individuals, and loyalties have to be adjusted according to the changing constellations of these individuals.

In a situation of stress, therefore, even the closest kinship ties may be superceded by considerations of power alignments — among the most graphic examples are the conflicts between close relatives in the family of the old Bohtan Pashas. Here struggle and bloodshed between brothers was endemic, and a history of the administration becomes a chronicle of constant battles between competing pretenders.

Rich (*op. cit.*, pp. 106—142) gives an extremely illuminating day-by-day account of the rupture between Mahmood Pasha and his brother Osman Bey — easily produced by Turkish intrigue, in spite

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

571 of the unquestionable integrity of both brothers, and their desperate efforts to resist. The account follows the development from Osman Bey dissuading his brother from abdicating in his favor, through his efforts later to resist Turkish pressures, when he «had a kind of determination and fierceness, like a man who has set his back against the wall» (p. 313) till finally open conflict resulted between the brothers, and Osman Bey was reduced to a pawn in the hands of the Ottoman Pasha of Baghdad. Rich describes his last conversation with Mahmood Pasha: «I told him . . . that nevertheless I prayed God for the prosperity and strength of his family and country. He said neither could ever be strong, while so many powerful members of the family existed. I insisted that it might be. 'Yes' said he, 'if God sent a plague among us and only left one alive'» (p. 323).

571 554 *Loyalty to leader.* In spite of what has been said, loyalties may remain with a leader after his defeat, when the actual organization of which he is the head is greatly reduced in power, and he himself, as was frequently the case, in exile across the border. This relates to the distinction made between the «ideal» and «de-facto» hierarchy (p. 98 ff). For example in Baban times, one Pasha might be dethroned in favor of an other through the intervention of Ottoman or Persian armies. In such cases, the old leader would often retain his high prestige and status in the ideal hierarchy, though he controlled little de-facto power at the moment; once the external force were removed, he would then be able to regain ascendancy.

In a wider application, this means that the relative power by which competing leaders are evaluated, and which forms the basis for transfer of loyalties, is to considerable extent what I have called the person's ability to *rally* supporters, i. e. his individual status in the *ideal* hierarchy, not the de-facto power he controls qua *office*-holder. The apparent contradiction between the above pattern of transfer of loyalties, and the at times heroic loyalty to a leader in the face of great adversity, stressed in Kurdish tales and chronicles, thus disappears. Such examples of stubborn loyalties indicate situations of wide discrepancy between the «ideal» and the «de-facto» power hierarchies.

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Chapter VII.

The detribalization process.

In the same way as certain part-statuses are incompatible with others in combination in a single person, certain of these statuses are incompatible in a single village community. Where two part-status positions imply conflicting interests in the same field of activity, the part-status that controls most de-facto power will dominate the scene, and sooner or later replace the other or re-define its field of relevance. A unified discussion of these aspects of incompatibility should contribute to our understanding of social change in the South Kurdish countryside.

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The mechanics of such redefinition and replacement of part-status categories should be clear from the previous discussion. From the supra-village level, a new factor is introduced, modifying the power or prestige connected with a certain part-status position — e. g. the introduction of a civil code that robs the *mullah* of much of his power, a serious defeat reduces the prestige of a previously dominant *ilva*, or land registration settles property disputes in the favour of certain persons. The individual occupying a relative position in the total hierarchy of supra- and sub-ordination may then find one of two things to have happened: (a) his power, and thus his de-facto position in the hierarchy, has been modified, in which case a fluid adjustment and transfer of loyalties will tend to follow in the village community, or (b) his de-facto power, in itself unchanged, is in time modified by changes in the relative prestige attached to his

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part-status — his ability to rally persons is augmented or impaired, with direct results on his position in the power hierarchy. Either or both of these reactions may result — i.e. primary changes in either or both the de-facto (a) and the ethnic (b) hierarchy may be produced. In certain cases the change produced by the same factor in these two hierarchies may be in contradiction, and the final adjustment is then dependent on the degree of external interference.

The patterns of these reactions and changes are set by the precedents of loyalties in conflict situations, crudely sketched above. It should then be theoretically possible to correlate the nature and form of social change in Southern Kurdistan with the factors. The assumption is generally, and I think legitimately, made that all non-tribal groups of Kurds are ultimately to be derived from one or more tribal groups. At present, at any rate, the direction of change between the two poles, from *tribal* to non-tribal or *feudal*, is very evident, and some of the factors resulting in such a detribalization process clearly follow from the above discussion. There is further considerable indication that only the two poles themselves, described as *tribal* and *feudal*, are moderately stable, and that change from the one to the other, once initiated, is a moderately rapid process. This is e. g. indicated by the numerical preponderance of villages of the polar types as compared to intermediary types. It also follows logically from the concept of incompatibility of certain part-statuses in a single village: many of the tribal and non-tribal formal categories or part-statuses overlap in their fields of relevance, and this results in competition, and elimination or re-definition, where they are combined in one local community. Once the process of un-enrolling is under way, the complete set of non-tribal categories will then tend to replace its tribal counterparts.

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Probably the most potent agents of social change, with a very direct relation to the power hierarchy in the village, are changes in the pattern of land tenure. Ottoman land codes and taxation policy, corrupt administration, and the increasing emphasis in Kurdish culture on leisure and real property have all encouraged the concentration of land in few hands, and the establishment of feudal patterns of delegation of usufruct rights on land. The resulting class hierarchy

laborer-tenant intermediary-absentee landowner, differs radically from that generally associated with tribal organization, which includes relatively few laborers and/or Mrabtin, and a majority of freeholding farmers.

The incompatibility of categories from these two class hierarchies is evident, as is the tendency for the hierarchy embodying most power — i. e. the more highly centralized organization headed by the landowner — to replace the other. The absentee landowner who owns only part of the land of a village, will find his powers greatly impaired by the co-existence of freeholding farmers with his tenants in the local community. The sanctions by which he disciplines his tenants are reduced in effect — eviction from land is less serious, eviction from the village dependent on the vote of villagers outside his control. Similarly, he would be limited in his freedom to settle new farmers on the land by a veto on the part of the freeholding farmers, who could refuse the newcomer village membership. The village headman would almost certainly be elected from among the freeholding farmers, and serve as a coordinator of opposition to the landowner, etc. etc. The landowner, occupying the part-status that embodies most power in this situation of conflicting interests will tend to apply his powers to eliminate the incompatible status category — in this case by buying or forcibly taking over the proprietary rights on the remaining land, and giving the formerly freeholding farmers tenant status.

Where the right to eviction, and in fact the final powers of decision in all village matters, are taken away from the formerly freeholding farmer group, it becomes impossible for it to control a class of Mrabtin serfs, and this status group is similarly eliminated, and presumably assimilated as tenant farmers of lower status, following from their lower wealth.

A second major agent of change, or at times a concomitant of these economic changes, is the factor of modification of the administrative system by external administration. The tribal administrative mechanism, based on consensus-kinship-patterned loyalties, has been discussed above (pp. 61 ff). Where external administration — large absentee landowner or central government alike — enters and

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MAll Kurd MAll

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enforces its decisions by coercive means, the pattern of tribal administration breaks down, and a transfer of loyalties will tend to result — e. g. as in the case of the Mamasani *ilva*, cf. p. 126.

At the time of the Bakan Pashas, the [illegible] of less importance, and external administration was along traditional lines. The Baban Pashas utilized the principles of indirect rule, essential in the application of a feudal system to an area of ethnic mixture. Though external administration thus was a less active agent in producing detribalization, it was still operative. The Baban Pashas lent power to the traditional leaders in their hierarchy, and supported many of their decisions by coercive means. In the nomadic groups, this was less necessary, since the necessity and functions of an organizing leader are obvious to all members of the community. In the settled communities, the need for a coordinator is less obvious to the individual member of the group, and the leader's authority will be more readily questioned. Either a constant process of segmentation must be operative, as among the Hamawands, or the «kinship head» type of leader can not retain control. External administration, however, has vested interests in retaining status quo and avoiding conflicts, and therefore applies its powers to resist fusion of groups. Thus the close kinship unity of the local group is lost, and tribal organization is weakened. At the same time, external administration wishes to have a clear and moderately constant leader to deal with, and will thus attempt to strengthen the power of the leader and stabilize his position, to counteract these disorganizing tendencies. Thus it becomes necessary to vest the leader with coercive means, and this leads to the complete breakdown of the traditional tribal lineage organization.

The predominance of non-tribal communities in the area under closest Baban control must be seen as the cumulative effect of centuries of centralized rule, where such factors would be operative. It should also be remembered that any movement of people — except where it occurs in larger blocks — alienates the migrant from his hereditary *ilva* group, and places him in a non-tribal system of administration wherever he chooses to settle, since there is no mechanism by which he may be adopted into a new lineage.

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

Thus a fairly clear dichotomy can be made in Kurdish territory between tribal areas, in which lineages form the bases for the political structures, and lineage groups correspond directly to territorial groups, and non-tribal areas where the territorial group forms the sole basis of organization in a semi-feudal system, and, though descent and kinship are important, any type of lineage organization is absent.

Though this change from tribal to non-tribal organization seems, as far as any specific community is concerned, to be a road of no return, and there has been a constant detribalization process going on through time, the actual border between the areas where tribal vs. feudal organizations predominate has remained moderately constant for many generations, with apparently only minor oscillations. This must be seen as a steady state, where the rate of population movement — in tribal blocks or segments of such — from the mountains towards and into the plains roughly compensated for the formerly slow rate of breakdown in tribal organization along the zone of contact with external administration.

This rough balance has been completely upset by the changes following the First World War. The rate of detribalization has been tremendously speeded up by modern communications, reaching into the mountain fastness and most distant valleys; external administration has pacified all the old tribal strongholds; and movements of groups across the border from Persia are prevented or at least seriously hampered. It is thus only a question of time, probably less than a generation, till the segmentary lineage type of tribal organization is completely replaced by the non-tribal type in Southern Kurdistan.

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Chapter VIII.

Conclusion

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The types of Kurdish social organization described above seem, even apart from their local cultural dress, somewhat different from those usually reported by anthropologists. Especially the combination in the «tribal» organization of a lineage system, close family endogamy, and a kinship terminology without unilineal emphasis poses some interesting problems.

It has been suggested (e. g. Murdock 1949, p. 234) that this Kurdish situation reflects the breakdown of a previous organization based on exogamous sib groups, following the introduction of Islam, with the Koranic permission, or even encouragement, to marry close kin. Clearly, this explanation is not sufficient, considering how fundamental the pattern seems in the Kurdish tribal organization, and the unusually high incidence of FaBrDa marriage as compared to other Moslem communities.

As far as the historical and comparative material goes, there is little reason to believe that the tendency towards close family endogamy is an Islamic innovation in the area. In appraising the historical material, it is important, as Luzbetak (1951) emphasizes, to distinguish between (a) classical centers of endogamy with examples of brother-sister marriage in royal lineages (Egypt, Sumer, Elam, Arabia, Persia), connected with a tremendous elaboration and emphasis on hereditary prestige, and (b) areas where close family endogamy was a basic feature of the social organization, and operated

on a village level. Eliminating the cases of type (a), there is still ample evidence of endogamous patterns of non-Islamic or pre-Islamic origin, especially in the Caucasus-Armenian area, of which the Kurdish mountains are geographically an extension. The customary law of Daghestan prescribes close kin marriage, and explicitly forbids the marriage with an outsider (ibid). The early ecclesiastical laws of Armenia attack next-of-kin marriages with great vehemence (ibid, p. 643), and such practices caused great concern among the early Christian missionaries, till they were eventually rooted out. Thus, rather than regard the Kurdish combination of patterns as a labile state produced by cross-cultural mixture, it would seem reasonable to grant the Kurdish «tribal» organization considerable antiquity as a stable variant or *type* of lineage organization, of some theoretical interest.

On a structural level, it can be argued that a pattern of FaBrDa marriage serves to reinforce the political implications of the lineage system. Solidarity to the patrilineal descent group in abstracto is minimal. Close family endogamy results in a direct correspondance between lineage segments and local groups, giving the descent groups a clear territorial framework in which the lineage organization can function. On the individual level, a man's political position and power depends in the last instance on the number of riflemen he can muster. However, only co-lineage males can be expected to give such political support. A pattern of FaBrDa marriage contributes to prevent alienation of immediate collateral lines, and re-affirms the old man's leading position in relation to his agnatic nephews, thereby vesting him with control over a larger agnatic group of males.

Where the lineage is found in other areas as a corporate group, it is usually connected with a kinship terminology of the «lineage» type, which, through unilineal emphasis and classificatory extensions contributes in defining and delimiting these corporate groups. Kurdish kinship terms, on the other hand, are purely «descriptive» in that they measure geneological distance between near kin. Nor do they show any unilineal emphasis. In other words, they do not contribute in any way to the definition of unilineal corporate groups. However, when this terminology is seen in combination with the

FaBrDa marriage pattern, the characteristics become meaningful, and the different function of kinship terminology in the Kurdish type of lineage organization and other types of lineages emerges:

Where a moderately consistent pattern of FaBrDa marriage and other close family endogamy is followed, the local, endogamous community becomes in fact the descent group. In the Kurdish system, these local descent groups are given names — in effect *village* names, which thus indicate both residence and descent, and thereby political affiliation. The corporate framework of the lineage is thus given directly in the named residence units, and kinship terms are unneccessary to further emphasize this corporate character. On the contrary, the terminology measures collateral distance, of considerable importance where relatives beyond a certain degree tend to form separate, endogamous sub-sections, disruptive to village unity and ultimately conducive to fission. Essentially, however, the kinship terminology is liberated from its functions in defining political units in the lineage system, and is utilized simply to describe relationship, possibly with a primary interest in inheritance. Here the effect of the complex Islamic law of inheritance may have been considerable — if it has in fact been applied to sufficient extent in its more subtle ramifications.

A second modification of the usual pattern, concerned with law and the blood feud, would seem to follow from the combination of a lineage organization and preferential FaBrDa marriage. Fortes (1953) summarizes: «where the lineage is found as a corporate group, all the members of a lineage are to outsiders jurally equal and represent the lineage when they exercise legal and political rights and duties in relation to society at large. This is what underlies so-called collective responsibility in blood vengance and self-help as among the Nuer (Evans-Pritchard 1940) and the Bedouin (Peters 1951).» On the background of this, the probable absence of weak development of collective responsibilty and blood feud in Kurdish society might seem puzzling.

Where the lineage system is associated with a pattern of village endogamy, however, as in the Kurdish system, the maximal lineage becomes in effect «the society», not merely one organized group

within it. Thus the whole situation in which jural concepts are to be applied changes radically. No supra-lineage political authority is developed, and no interaction between a lineage and other groups is necessary, except for a certain minimum of trade. At the time of the present fieldwork, of course, and probably for most tribes in the area at most times in the last 300 years, the maximal lineages were in fact not totally independent. They were, however, subject to *external* administration, and that not consistently; and the indigenous social organization does not call for or lead to any supra-lineage integration. The concept of jural equivalence is thus meaningless as applied to a Kurdish maximal lineage; such a concept could only be relevant as applied *within* the lineage, between groups of recognized blood relatives within the political unit. In this case, the disruptive effects of conflicts between what are in fact territorial groups within the unit prevent the extension of patterns of revenge to include larger collectivities than the immediate family, or a group of accomplices.

However, the lineage organization is only one type of social organization prevalent in the Kurdish area. With the breakdown of this regional organization based on politically autonomous, endogamous descent groups, the integration of the separate, endogamous villages into larger political units poses a new problem. Non-tribal Kurdish social organization might be summarized as a system of hierarchical statuses, identified with particular individuals, and sanctioned by force more than anything else. This organization is then expanded into a larger, regional, semi-feudal system. This was at best a very labile structure, until frozen by the intervention of effective external administration which favored status quo. In the place of the regional deplacement of lineage groups in large «tribal» districts, one finds an open web of relations between separate, endogamous, socially quite autonomous small villages. These form no natural larger units, except in purely physiographic or dialect terms. In this open web, feudal hierarchies might establish areas of influence, but until external administration imposed an arbitrary regional classification in terms of counties and districts, any areal units tended to be extremely fluid.

62 64 Parsons (1952) states the problem in general terms: «There seem to be certain elements of inherent instability in societies where the overwhelming bulk of the population is organized on the basis of peasant village communities. One of the reasons for this is the fact that the village community as a primary focus of solidarity can only within very narrow limits be an effective unit for the organization of the use of force. It is, in the face of any more extensive organization, not a defensible unit. Hence there must always be a 'superstructure' over a peasant society, which, among other things, organizes and stabilizes the use of force. The queston is how far such a superstructure is, as it were, 'organically' integrated with the self-contained village communities and often the level of integration is not high.» (pp. 162-3).

'This problem of *integration* the local non-tribal political institutions were unable to solve satisfactorily; and the secondary role played by the quite large Kurdish population in the history of the Middle East may to considerable extent be related to this failure.

7: Barth E-5 (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

APPENDIX I: Land use.

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According to the Kurdish farmers, there are three classes of land for wheat and barley crops; the same field, differently treated, belonging in any of these three classes:

(1) *Wushka ward* (dry land). Old fields or new land is plowed once in the winter, while it is raining. In the middle of the spring it is plowed again, after which it is left fallow all summer, during which time it grows over with a scatter of weeds. When the farm work is finished in the fall, the field is plowed again, the seed is spread by hand, and the field is cross-plowed. Ideally, it should be plowed over even once more, but few farmers have the time and animals to invest in that. This is the best kind of land, and gives by far the best yield. The work should be finished before the winter rains set in, so the fields get the full benefit from them. In the spring, the crops also resist the locust better, since the plants have grown relatively large before the locusts appear.

(2) *Meo ward*. A simplified form of *wushka ward*, in which the farmer for some reason has not done spring plowing (the farmer was sick, his oxen sick, occupied with too much other work, too little winter rains, etc.). The fields are thus plowed once in the winter, and then left fallow till next autumn. When the rains set in, the seed is spread (in spite of a considerable stand of grass and weeds in the field), and the field is plowed once over, in consequence of which most of the weeds die. This is not as good as *wushka ward*, but better than

(3) *Terra kal* (wet, immature), in which the field is *not* given a fallow year. The farmer waits for the first winter rains. After the earth is soaked, the field is plowed once. Some times the seed is spread and the field is cross-plowed as soon as possible. A better procedure is to wait for more rains, some 20 days or so, and then seed and cross-plow. In the meantime, some of the grasses and other wild plants will have revied and resumed growing; these now become weeded out. Most of the work connected with *terra kal* is done in the middle of the winter, in rain, sleet, or even snow, and involves considerable discomfort. Furthermore, the plants being later to develop, they suffer more from locusts; and the fertility of the land

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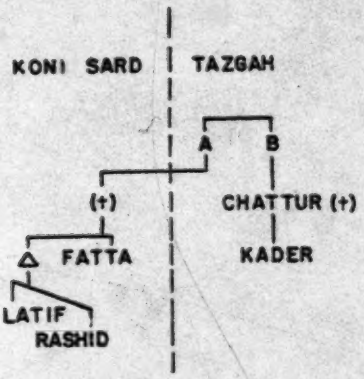
241 311 is reduced from not being given a fallow year. The same field can not be used as *terra kal* for any longer period of time.

Essentially, then, the pattern is one of alternate year fallow and alternate year grain crop. Since no other major crop is raised on this type of dry, un-irrigated land, any pattern of rotation is impossible. Cow dung, being a major source of fuel, is not available as fertilizer. The constant plowing, in addition to making the land able to absorb and retain the moisture of the winter rains, should also be useful in building up the humus by burying the weeds that develop.

APPENDIX II: A conflict involving revenge.

628 The closest approximation to an actual bloodfeud which I observed in progress was concerned with the rights to land, and involved a small lineage which finds itself split between the two villages Tazgah and Koni Sard, in Hamawand territory. The wronged party being consid rably more willing to discuss the situation, the following account may be slightly biased in their favor.



Two brothers, A and B, grandfathers of the present contestants, and both residents of the village of Tazgah, divided their father's land between them. A sold his field to a third person; B's son, Chattur, later bought it. A's son moved to the neighboring village of Koni Sard, where he worked as a landless laborer. Finally, A's grandson, Fatta, claimed the land back. Chattur, in posession of the land, expressed his willingness to sell; Fatta countered, saying that the crops of the past years were sufficient payment — a not uncommon argument. In the resulting quarrel, Fatta shot Chattur dead.

Kader, the son of Chattur, was then a very small boy, and Fatta was widely known as a competent rifleman, so nothing was done. After killing one more person, unconnected with the present conflict, Fatta became an outlaw.

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In the rather unusual setting of an archaeological excavation, the orphaned Kader found himself working beside Latif and Rashid from Koni Sard, the nephews and nearest relatives of Fatta. This precipitated action on his part. Nothing was noticed for a brief period of work in the area belonging to the village of Koni Sard. When operations were transferred to Tazgah's territory, Kader swore he would not stand for it, and promised to revenge his father. The two boys Latif and Rashid were extremely afraid, and were, upon their request, immediately removed from the site, and a settlement with the group of workmen from Tazgah was later achieved, with some difficulty.

Later, Fatta, who being an outlaw had little to lose, attempted to intimidate the villagers of Tazgah by a further murder (a woman unrelated to Chattur and Kader), and by setting fire to their grainfields, in spite of the armed sentries the Tazgahes had posted there. The people of Koni Sard, Fatta's village, discovered the fire, and disassociated themselves with the action by assisting in putting it out. None the less, they are accused of continually housing him in secret. Kader is still a young boy, and has sworn to revenge his father by killing Fatta.

The essential points seem to be (1) Kader's revenge was transferred to the nephews of his father's murderer only because the murderer himself was out of reach, and because Kader, due to unprecedented circumstances, found himself working beside the nephews on the land of his own village — all a strong implied insult to his honor. (2) Kader did not receive active support in avenging his father, even though the father was, at the time of the murder, the *Agbs* of Tazgah village. (3) The village of Koni Sard was able to disassociate itself from the acts of Fatta — possibly because he did not belong to the major lineage group of that village.

These points would indicate that no developed pattern of blood feud, as defined in the main body of the text, is operative; and where patterns superficially similar to blood feud are found, these can better be explained as a slight extension of a strong pattern of individual revenge, or, in certain cases, a struggle between two lineages for political supremacy.

APPENDIX III: The education of a mullah.

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The scholarly standards of the best village mullahs might be exemplified by a listing of the teachers and course of study of Mullah Said Mohammed, now of the village of Djeshana. He was born in Sharbasher, and grew up in the village of Tepeshwankara in the Barzan valley between Suleimani and Chemchemal. No religious traditions in the family, his interests were stimulated by the older mullah brother of an agemate. After having finished reading the Koran at the age of 9, and then forgotten it again, he decided to become a mullah at the age of 12. He finished the Koran again at 14, under the direction of his village mullah. He then travelled to Suleimani, and studied

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1 year with Shaikh Mohammed Ikhal, now a religious judge,
3 years with Abdullah Choroxani, teacher in Qanaka mosque in Suleimani,
2 » » Aziz Effendi, religious judge,
1 » » Hussein Pishenni,
1 » » Shaikh Baba Ali,
1 » » Shaikh Nuri, son of Baba Ali,
1 » » Hamma Said.
Travelled to Warmawa near Halebja, studied
2 » » Abdul Kader Sufi,
travelled to Biara, in the Hauramani mountains, studied
½ » » Abdul Karim,
travelled to Halebja, studied
½ » » Shaikh Rasul,
travelled to Galala in the Penbdir mountains, studied
1 » » Hadji Mohammed Raiz.
Returned to Suleimani, studied
½ » » Shaikh Omar in Qanaka mosque,
returned to Halebja, studied
½ » » Shaikh Omar in Qanaka mosque,
Education completed A. H. 1355 (A. D. 1935), certificate issued by Shaikh Baba Rasul and Mullah Abdul Kader after 15 years of wandering and studies.

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[For additional information on status, role and prestige, see category 136, pp. 78-130 passim.]